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MARIE ANTOINETTE

The Player Queen

BY

JOHN GARBER PALACHE

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PALACHE

MARIE ANTOINETTE

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FOREWORD

NEVER so certain of her innocence as at the time of her condemnation, never so brave as when she faced her execution, Marie Antoinette wrote in her last hour of imprisonment one of the great letters of history.

But its greatness is the courage, not the understanding she revealed. She hoped that history would see her as she saw herself in the supreme moment of her life; and she could not imagine that her story would be distorted, both by favorable and unfavorable historians, as her life had been molded by the brilliance and the darkness of her fate.

The malice of the old regime and the hatred of the Revolution described her as a fiend. The Restoration responded to the glamour of her youth by flinging over her a glittering and becoming veil, and to the appalling record of her pain by transforming her into a saint.

New details of her life in volume after volume of letters and memoirs of the *fin de siècle* threw both the earlier portraits into disrepute until, nearly an hundred years after her death, authentic versions of her letters and those of her mother Marie Thérèse, her brother Joseph II, the Austrian ambassador Mercy-Argenteau, Mirabeau, Barnave, and Fersen, were recognized as the chief records of her life.

But her biographers, full of new information, took for granted certain points. They asserted either that she was Fersen's mistress or that she was not; either that her friendships with one or two women were merely sentimental or that they were perverted; either that she could have controlled the Revolution by following Mirabeau's advice, or that she could not. But, after presenting the existing and inconclusive evidence, these questions must be left to individual interpretation.

There are, however, certain aspects of her life and character which have not been sufficiently emphasized. Although her letters and those of her contemporaries have often been quoted, there are parts of them which furnish new material when used to demonstrate, among other things, her reasons for thinking, early in her career, that France would remain obedient to the monarchy; to show the extent of her responsibility for France's interference in the Bavarian and Scheldt affairs; the nature of her foreign correspondence during the Revolution, loyal from her point of view, disloyal from that of France; the fact that she was superficially French, essentially German; superficially a queen, essentially one whom others ruled; and, finally, the general effect upon her destiny of the special relationship between the mental, moral, and temperamental elements of her nature.

For character played a part no less important than that of circumstance in the formation of her fate. Although no one could either understand the Revolution or divert it from its course, Marie Antoinette was the person who, in her position, could and did most devastatingly, although inadvertently, increase the exasperation and the violence of her subjects. They believed the fiction and the facts which calumny reported, for the indiscretion of the Queen had made them credible, and had thereby dishonored monarchy, and opened Versailles' gates to France.

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Book One

THE QUEEN OF VERSAILLES

— This many summers in a sea of glory
But far beyond my depth.

— SHAKESPEARE

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CHAPTER I

THE ROYAL WEDDED CHILDREN

. . . each royal house
By God's fair ordinance conjoin together.
Smile, Heaven, upon this fair conjunction
That long hath frowned upon their enmity.

— SHAKESPEARE

GRANDDAUGHTER of the Holy Roman Emperor, great Charles VI, of King Joseph loved by Lorraine; daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor Francis I, of the Empress Marie Thérèse whom Austria loved; brilliant in the foreground of an ancestral perspective supremely sovereign, Marie Antoinette was born on November 2, 1755, the day of the *Festival of the Dead*. Public rejoicing in Vienna was decreed for two days. No one knew what prevented gaiety, but the court was not gay. Lisbon at that moment torn by earthquake, swept by tidal wave, could not turn an Austrian song of thanksgiving into a requiem, but a strange apprehension saddened thoughts that centred on an auspicious birth.

All Europe had been copying Versailles, and Austria had built Schönbrunn, the country place of the imperial family. It did not achieve the high formality, the imposing grandeur of the Sun King's halls and garden, nor the glittering rigidity of his court. Such imperfections by no means prevented Marie Antoinette and her sister Caroline from spending much time driving, walking, playing, followed by little yapping dogs, in this imperial imitation of a king's estate. Caroline encouraged her younger sister in a taste for gossip, and for ridicule unrestricted by respect of persons. Nothing was

easier for the numerous children of Austria than to evade discipline, to find amusement, for the family was more in evidence than the crown, and an ambitious mother let her children play. In this admirable court amusements, petty intrigues, and frivolity were of small importance. "My subjects are the first objects of my thoughts, my children are the second," said the Empress. Her subjects took most of her time, for she ruled her empire with her own hand. Francis I was little more than her private secretary, and he preferred to play with future kings and queens rather than try to teach them what he scarcely knew himself. Marie Thérèse saw the children once a week, and read with satisfaction the daily reports of the doctor in charge.

Weber, Marie Antoinette's nurse's child, bounced on one imperial knee, his foster sister on the other. Aged nine and seven, Mozart and the future Queen of France played a clavecin together, showing that genius and royalty can cooperate if genius be tactful and royalty kind. One day when he had slipped upon the polished palace floor, she ran to pick him up. "You are good and I will marry you," he thanked her. "Why ?" interrupted the Empress who loved both. "Out of gratitude and because she is kind. Her sisters took no notice of my mishap."

One day this kindness made her give her little store of money to the poor. This was her idea of charity; this was the way to make the people happy; this, she thought, was her great mother's way. She did not see it as a gesture; she did not know that successful sovereigns work as hard as any laborer if they wish to keep the people's love. She had not seen her mother at her desk. She was too young to have a knowledge of such toil, but would she ever learn to understand ? She was not only generous, she had a natural honesty; she would not take credit for lines in her copy-book which her governess had written to help her. The governess was there-

upon dismissed, replaced by another who failed to discipline her pupil.

Being a normal child, she had not learned the lessons that are overtones of play, nor did she find wisdom in her first sorrow. Her father died in the course of a journey. When he left the palace he had been oppressed by a conviction that he would never see his favorite daughter again, and he had returned for a last embrace, entreating her to take a day each year to prepare herself for death as if that apprehension which the court had felt now weighed on him.

While Marie Antoinette played in the gardens, the French and Austrian rulers, who had long been enemies, decided to form an alliance against their other foes, and through the labyrinth of secret diplomatic intercourse a victorious idea emerged, after conquering a thousand obstacles of clashing interests and of personal wishes: the heir to the throne of France was to wed the imperial child. One day she said: "I should like to reign in France, the kingdom of good Henry IV, of great Louis XIV." The delighted Empress sent this copy-bookish sentence to charm Louis XV who was neither good nor great nor interested in persons chiefly remarkable for possessing or admiring these qualities.

To train this future queen, Marie Thérèse selected a curriculum worthy of a finishing school. From France came Abbé Vermond who found Marie Antoinette particularly pleasing, spirited, gracious. Her coquetry did not hide from him her excellent heart and character, but she was more capable than desirous of knowledge, utterly untrained in serious application, and she reserved her concentration for amusement. Versailles would like this child, he thought, and agree with him that more regular features but no more attractive face could anywhere be found. Lessons, short at first, lengthened into conversation. "You take too much of the Abbé's time," said the Empress who had engaged all his time for her daugh-

ter. "No, mother, I see that he enjoys being with me." Vermond discoursed on the House of Bourbon, on French nobles, on army officers whose names she retained. He thought she answered well when he asked her what she would do in certain cases that had puzzled kings and queens, and she seemed to grasp his meaning when he told her that France had not loved its foreign queens who would not fight for France. She thought that this would not be said of her, and she dismissed his caution. Meanwhile he grew too fond of the Viennese Court to point out all the differences it presented to that of Versailles, and too fond of the Empress always to forget her interests in those of the nation to which her daughter was to swear allegiance. Thus it was not altogether fortunate that Vermond was to continue in France the instruction he began in Austria. Sometimes when reading solemn treatises on the vanities of society his pupil interrupted him with anecdotes and gossip; his serious comments were lost in laughter which he could neither approve nor control. Her French improved, her handwriting was still shocking, but he reported progress soothing to maternal ears.

That she might be French in all appearance, a *coiffeur* and actors came from France. Fashionable headdresses and gestures were more essential, much more easily acquired than solid learning, and they enhanced this child's distinguished graciousness of manner which astonished and delighted the formal gatherings of the court. Except for her teeth, soon to be straightened, she was almost a finished product. She began to forget the German language. Maria Antoinetta became Marie Antoinette. She had learned that Versailles was brilliant, powerful, gay; and already her mother's court in comparison with the prospect of the blaze of Versailles' lights, represented comparative dullness to this girl who knew nothing of a ruler's problems, who had no idea of the difficulties of her future position and no conception of what Austria's, of

what France's demands assuredly would be. She had been chiefly told of the importance of French manners. If she could speak and look her part, her mother would be satisfied that her heart would always be true to German interests and relations; and Versailles would keep her true to French interests and relations. Each rival court was sure of its success. This child was to obey Vienna and Versailles, to serve their mutual needs, and to arrange, if both governments were set upon the possession of a single unique thing, that both should have it.

Meanwhile the will of Louis XV and of Marie Thérèse had been obeyed, the marriage contract signed; and congratulations were in order. The marquis de Durfort arrived with a great train, and, as envoy extraordinary, made formal request of her hand in France's name. At the marriage by proxy, the appearance of the Dauphin's fiancée in an elaborate silver gown was generally proclaimed enchanting; yet in spite of celebration and formal satisfaction there was again an air of sorrow at court, not only due to imminent separation from this princess but to that mysterious apprehension which these courtiers had experienced but which Versailles never felt.

In Holy Week she was obliged to devote three days of seclusion from court and family to religious meditation. She told Vermond that she had had more ideas than she could express. Enough good thoughts, and some that were unwise, were lengthily propounded to and for her by the Empress in whose room she passed her last nights at Vienna, in order that maternal advice might flow into her at any moment and without delay. It flowed — in and out. Marie Thérèse dictated words and guided the unsteady hand that wrote them: "I know that your majesty is the best of fathers; I propose to be the tenderest, most obedient of daughters, and I look forward in consequence to all good fortune." She could not have stuffed her note more tightly with illusion. But it was the

proper thing for her thus to address Louis XV whom the Empress told in an enclosure that the girl's heart was good, though her head was none of the wisest. Would he not, this best of fathers, cherish and guide this child ?

Early on an April morning the carriages were ready. The mother sobbed, the daughter fainted. At the edge of Austria the princess said: "Alas ! I shall never see my mother again." She entered France at Strasbourg by the "Gate of Butchers," and was ushered into a room adorned with grimacing tapestried representations of Jason and Medea. "Ah !" exclaimed the Dauphine, "what an augury !" There were tears for departing Austrian attendants. Laughter was soon to greet this Mme de Noailles and call her Mme Etiquette, walking symbol of endless decorum, who stood complacently before the child she hoped to dominate. On an island in the Rhine, Marie Antoinette changed all her clothes. She could at least be French in every element of dress. With effective graciousness she interrupted an orator: "Do not speak German. From now on I understand no language except the French."

Strasbourg was whole-heartedly joyous, yet here lurked something worse than clouded gaiety, worse than tapestried horrors: the smiling face of foolish Rohan whom Marie Antoinette was fated unconsciously to please. Fountains of wine and adulation flowed in the streets, but flower girls made the best impression on their Austrian guest. The procession moved on. Near Châlons an old priest paid embarrassed homage; history was to repeat this detail — with a difference. The France that she first saw was smiling, prosperous, contented. It loved her, for her smiles were tokens of her love.

The carriages entered a forest and came to a halt. Marie Antoinette jumped out and knelt at the feet of the best of fathers who raised and kissed this child who appealed to him much more than to his grandson. That awkward youth barely smiled at her, begrudging even a formal embrace, begrudging

especially a day devoid of hunting. She noticed the peculiar contrast he presented to the gentleman she had expected to meet. She turned to look again at Louis XV. What had her warm young heart, her carefree mind in common with his selfishness, his weariness ? She could not see the depths in those old eyes for she had lit a brightness in them. She saw in him the graceful majesty, the model of the court about which she had dreamed, the patron of a gaiety which her mother could not understand.

On through the forest to Compiègne; and next day, after a call at the convent where the King's daughter waited near the royal tombs, they came to La Muette. Marie Antoinette was not surprised or shocked to find herself sitting at table with a pretty woman whom she had not seen before: a pretty woman with a gift for silly laughter who might perhaps be an amusing acquaintance for an archduchess. The royal family could not refuse to dine with the Austrian princess, otherwise it could not have been trapped into this special recognition of Mme Du Barry. Tactfully, though ignorant of this person's function, Marie Antoinette replied to an insidious question: "She is charming." Learning that this function was to please the King, she could again good-naturedly announce, still sure of herself, and still without the least resentment: "Then I shall be her rival."

Next morning shining brightly in the sun — Versailles. There was not time to look about, for the royal children must at once be wedded, and the bride was hurried into a heavily be-diamonded dress. She carried her assurance lightly, and Versailles mirrored her radiance. Seldom had brilliant costumes been so bright, seldom had graceful, youthful majesty touched cold courtiers as it did then. The sun streamed through the chapel windows, the organ announced the bridal party, the great court rose, the procession reached the altar, and on those steps where many princely pairs had knelt, another

pair was kneeling. "She looked very tiny, and not more than twelve, in her imperfectly fitted dress," remarked a guest. "The Dauphin's appearance was better than one could have expected, but he showed great nervousness during the ceremony, and blushed scarlet when he gave the ring."

The bride did one thing ungracefully: the signing of her name.

The pageant passed through palace rooms, stopping at the King's gambling table and again for supper in the new Salle d'Opéra where one might drink to royalty — for nineteen years. Thunder and lightning in the afternoon were unavoidable, unwelcome substitutes for the King's fireworks, but in the palace mirrors and jewels reflected a thousand lights with which Versailles twinkled at a storm-swept France.

At last the royal wedded children were numerously escorted to bed, blessed by an archbishop, the Dauphin's excessive shyness tortured by insistent publicity, making him ridiculous to the court, and to his wife a victim of boredom and indifference. The King had said to his grandson: "Eat little at your wedding supper." "No," replied this strange youth, "the more I eat the better I shall sleep." The King had shrugged his shoulders and resolved to bother himself no more about his grandson. What had the day meant to the Dauphin? "Nothing," said his diary, devoted like himself to hunting. Next morning, very early, he was up and ready for the chase. A few days later, entering his wife's room: "Have you slept?" "Yes." He went out, leaving Marie Antoinette to play with her little dog.

Versailles continued to celebrate an unconsummated marriage. "What do you think of the festivities?" asked the King. "They cannot be paid for," replied the minister of finance. But the King had planned nine days of dancing, dining, theatre-going and illuminations, and nine days there were, money or no money. There was one day of rest; the

Dauphine dined alone lectured by Mme Etiquette, while her husband hunted till he was very sleepy. Next night his sleep was postponed, and the reason, still worse than the fact, for he danced wretchedly, was that he must open a ball with his graceful wife. He felt relief rather than shame when she found an adequate partner in the young duc de Chartres. Her pleasure prevented her noticing the conspicuous absence of many members of the court, angered by special privileges granted foreign princes at the Empress' tactless request. Outside in the gardens there was no jealousy. Two hundred thousand subjects walked in the royal park, listened to music in the *bosquets,* watched the fireworks and the windows of the Galerie des Glaces, where the court in a blaze of color and candlelight multiplied in mirrors on the walls, looked out over the great terrace set with the reflecting waters of the pools. Gradually the King's company drifted away from the windows, while his people wandered all night in the gardens. Marie Antoinette had been sent to bed, the Dauphin had already gone to sleep. She longed to mingle with the crowd outside. She stored that scene in memory, and one day brought it back to life.

A great illumination of the Place Louis XV closed the festivities and this month of May. Paris converged in dense masses, Versailles in gilded carriages upon the capital's most spacious square. By foot, by boat, by all means all had come. It was Marie Antoinette's first view of Paris; but scarcely had she glimpsed the wide circle of light when suddenly her coach turned about and moved into the darkness toward Versailles. What had happened ? They would tell her later, though she was naturally anxious and annoyed. There had been an accident: a stray spark had turned a pile of fireworks into a battery firing on the people. In the ensuing panic there were trampled scores of dead, and they were thrown in heaps into ditches in the Cemetery of the Madeleine. Marie Antoinette could not

take risks; nothing could harm her on the Place Louis XV where the poor were dying; but, had she died, there could have been no thought of burying her among those helpless victims of disaster from which royalty with loyal attendants escaped in comfort. Young royalty next day gave all its pocket-money to the impoverished families of the dead, and the poor of Paris loved this young royalty which would be careful, when it had the crown, to keep fires and panics in control. The *philosophes* did not dream that on that graveyard of the Madeleine there would one day be a chapel to the memory of a king and queen; nor that before that time an unknown tyranny would pile corpses on that graveyard twice as high, and name that square from which they came the Place de la Révolution. The *philosophes* were dreaming of a contented, happy France, and of a Place de la Concorde set with monuments and fountains and a thousand lights reflected in smooth pavements for the pageant of a nation passing and repassing during long years of peace.

CHAPTER II

STEPS TO THE THRONE

. . . horizon suprême des terrasses

— SAMAIN

THIS CHILD of less than fifteen years had one main task: to learn the lesson of Versailles. Ever since the Sun King wearied of old grey walls, of memories of ancient lineage, of dangerous noblemen, and caused this golden palace to spring in terraced gardens from a desert, the problem of the intrigues and extravagance of the court had steadily increased, steadily declined to be solved. It marred the Sun King's scheme of brilliant and supreme success, of power clothed in grace and beautiful display, of shining satellites gathered at all hours to reflect the rays of suns blazing in unbroken succession across the future history of France. A dull cloud of hypocrisy dimmed the Sun King's setting; it divided, and followed him to Saint-Denis, and her who made it to Saint-Cyr. Versailles was still the brightest court in Europe, though underneath had thickened and multiplied all forms of intrigue and of petty interests, more and more selfish, more and more insatiable. With the Sun King had gone an emperor's strength, but still there was magnificence more than papal, manners that made other rulers crude and stiff; the divine right that patronized Divinity, the court that turned its back upon the altar to kneel with reverent face before the throne. Year by year, to please the court, the palace and the gardens grew; and year by year France paid, the court demanded more and more, returning less and less.

Three things were of importance at Versailles — the King,

his mistresses, his court. A queen was nothing. This was tradition, this was as it should be, this had been proven by the wives of Versailles' kings. It was not so in ancient France. Eight hundred years before the time of Marie Antoinette, the Queen had supervision of the treasury; the minister of finance was her subordinate, and the King could say: "My treasurer is my wife." But now had come this little foreign princess into a country which many centuries had changed. She had her own ideas and she grew restless in long months of inactivity. She thought this insignificance of a king's wife due to the mistresses of the King. "When I am Queen," she thought, "all will be well. The King shall have no mistress except me, and I will make the pleasures of the court legitimate — an answer to all possible objections." Meanwhile she would amuse herself as best she might. Her life should not be dull, let hunting dauphins and solemn joyless preachers male and female do their worst.

Meanwhile the child could not escape etiquette and routine. She rose at nine-thirty or ten, dressed, said her prayers, breakfasted; visited her aunts with whom the King was apt to be. Coiffure at eleven, reception of visitors just before noon, while she washed her hands and put on her rouge. Men retired, women stayed to watch her dress again. Mass daily at noon followed by a hasty luncheon in public with the Dauphin. If he was free she went to his room; if busy, to her own, to read or write or work at a vest for the King "which is making slow progress, but I hope that with God's help it will be ready for him in a few years." At three again to the aunts to see the King; at four the Abbé Vermond in her room; from five to six she underwent her dancing or music lessons. At half past six another visit to the aunts, usually accompanied by the Dauphin. From seven to nine, gambling unless the weather suggested a walk. Supper at nine. At a quarter to eleven to the aunts once more to see the King. Bed at eleven. Slight

PORTRAITS OF MARIE ANTOINETTE AS A BABY

Above: *to the left, an anonymous miniature portrait at the age of three or four days; to the right, an anonymous miniature at the age of four.*

Below: *to the left, a portrait at Versailles at about the age of five; to the right, a portrait (attributed to F. Wagenschoen) at the age of six.*

changes in schedule on Sundays and holidays. In the summer at Choisy she was sometimes up till half-past one. The King, noticing her exhaustion, bade her go one night to bed at eleven, but this was just because she was a child. If she were still more weary at an older age she might not rest, for Versailles' kings never took pity on ladies sleepy, sick, or pregnant, but made them eat and play and travel at the royal will.

The court life even of a child was so full that Marie Antoinette had difficulty in finding time to answer her mother's letters which she had been instructed to destroy for fear of prying eyes. Sometimes she wrote messily at her toilette, having no other opportunity. Special messengers came and went, the ordinary mail being untrustworthy, and sometimes the princess was surprised at her mother's information, though she never suspected the long, frequent, detailed letters which the tireless hand of Ambassador Mercy sent constantly to the complaining Empress. "Lady Prayerful," as Catherine the Great (known to the Austrian sovereign as "that woman") nicknamed Marie Thérèse, wrote her daughter: "Be not frivolous like the French, but glory in being a good German. If you are cordial to my subjects you will be praised, not blamed." This refrain was dinned into her ears by patient Mercy, patient Vermond whose advice she evaded without realizing its dangerous character. She was to find that however much she did for Austria she would be urged to do still more. Her mistake was not her failure to obey her mother but that she did not work out a better conduct for herself. "There is nothing I would not do to show my mother that I love her," she told Mercy, "yet I fear her though she is far away. I cannot even write her without apprehension"; and she felt her mother's constant criticism of her behavior.

What, in general, was her conduct at court? "She is vivacious, somewhat childish," said the King, "but naturally so at her age." Mercy discovered that in a month she had grasped

the salient points in the chief characters surrounding her. She behaved admirably in church. Elsewhere she was too outspoken, too fond of gossip and laughter. She had not of course as yet perceived all the intricacy of the party spirit that dominated the court. She liked Choiseul because he had helped to bring her here, and she ignored the fact that at the moment he was the leader of a faction supported by the people and the Parlement. She had not encountered all the petty plotting that encircled Du Barry, but she was beginning to see something of the complexity of the currents that mingled in the stream.

Her first problem was the Dauphin's tutor, Vauguyon, a sly man with a pretense of virtue who treated the Dauphin as a child. He curried favor with the King's mistress by urging the King to admit his grandson to the Saint-Hubert supper parties at which that woman presided. Mme Etiquette told tales of the tutor's intrigues and ambitions which angered Marie Antoinette, while the aunts explained Du Barry's position to their nephew, hoping, as Marie Antoinette did too, that he would not attend those suppers. But, to avoid complications, he said he must obey the King. Vauguyon, fearing the Dauphine had been warned against him, angered but did not frighten her by threatening to tell the King of some imprudent utterances of hers if she should try to thwart her husband's tutor's schemes. Moreover he had bothered her even in the selection of a librarian. She watched for opportunity till one day she discovered Vauguyon behind a door that might be closed to him forever. "Monsieur," she said, "the Dauphin is old enough to dispense with your services, and I am not in need of being spied upon. I desire not to see you here again." Her mind had been made up, partly by others, as it was repeatedly to be, but those others were not to share the blame. No matter, this time she happened to be right. Exit Vauguyon.

His tutor gone, the Dauphin, as it were, fell into his wife's hands, and on them he hung heavily. He neither understood nor cared to understand Versailles. He had affectionate memories of his father's nobility of character, untouched by king and court, the devoted son of an outraged Queen who held him long after she had lost the King's light love. The Dauphin's father had said: "It is joyful not to grow old in this world," this world of the court, even the wider world of a nation whose sovereign might, he had at one time felt, be happy in its happiness. "Ah, if I were master, I would make such an example of Mme de Pompadour as would terrify for centuries all who would corrupt the virtue of kings." The Dauphin never forgot a rumor that Choiseul had something to do with the alleged poisoning of this son of Louis XV, and he had resolved that Choiseul should never prosper at his hands. But how was this sense of virtue which the Dauphin had inherited from his father and grandmother to prosper at Versailles? The King regarded virtue as the associate of dullness, dear to the dead Queen and to her dead son, hampering or opposing certain elements of gaiety in spite of all his patronage. Marie Antoinette was to have many opportunities of seeing what profit there might be in virtue at Versailles. The Dauphin's virtuous elder brother and his virtuous father were now dead. The Dauphin's younger brothers, less virtuous than he, were to survive him.

Events attending the Dauphin's birth were interpreted as celestial warnings by persons fond of prophecy. The bringer of the news fell from his horse and died. The priest who came to christen him was struck with paralysis on the grand staircase. There was a strange mortality among the Dauphin's nurses. "Why did I give the name of duc de Berry to this child, a name that brings misfortune?" wondered the King without troubling himself to change the title. At the moment of the Dauphin's birth the Parlement returned triumphantly

to Paris which joined it loudly in a chorus of denunciations hurled at Versailles.

The Dauphin intensely disliked everything connected with the management or government of persons or of the people. He loved to chase cats on the roof of the palace, to jump into the saddle and ride with astonishing energy for one so slow at other times. Louis XV himself had tastes which the Sun King would have frowned upon. He was a good cook, he made snuff-boxes, he worked with a lathe, he had been known to hold the handles of a plough. But it was always satisfactory to know that he preserved an air of majesty which redeemed these humble interests. Not so his grandson, equally crude if not equally awkward in a palace or a workshop, "he labors with the laborers, carrying heavy stones and boards," his wife wailed, "and he returns tired and sleepy." On the other hand, exercise was good for him and he was growing stronger. He loved the humor of burlesque, the loudness of laughter, the excess of eating. His wife was German only at heart, but he was German in manner, and his understanding of France was no more profound than hers. He had no choice or taste in dress, and lacked completely the consummate skill with which the Sun King made a ceremonial of the mere handling of his hat, struck blows decisively, or made ingratiating gestures with his sword. Louis XVI found his hat a nuisance and his sword tripped him up. The monarchy was losing every attribute of deftness and of force, and the attempts of peasants to sit upon the throne of kings would be no more incongruous than his. In his person Versailles became ridiculous and France ceased to fear it. Coming back from the chase at half-past two in the morning he stumbled sleepily upstairs, and gossip called him drunk. Sometimes he relieved the tedious formality of going to bed by wrestling with courtiers, one of whom one night he nearly strangled; or by intelligent but untimely geographical dissertations. This

smooth-tempered youth had moments of irritation. Beaten at billiards he broke his cue and henceforth resolved to play only with his wife.

While he amused himself with hunting and manual labor his princess tried to relieve the boredom of life in the palace. Even at her age, she was frequently obliged to receive formal company, and spend what seemed to her far too much time in studying politics, history, and literature. She had rather play with two dirty little dogs; and her greatest ambition was to go riding. Should she have a horse or donkey ? The King favored the safer animal but Marie Thérèse thought tame asses too wild, and an equestrian princess an anomaly. The aunts however persuaded the King that horses were not dangerous. "Well," wrote the Empress, "at least you must promise not to ride to the chase." Her daughter promised. In fact, she usually followed the hunt in a carriage. But one day — would the Empress know ? — she mounted her horse for such a purpose — only once — and why confess ? Could she do or confess anything in peace ? She did not race her horse except one day when she rode so fast over rough country that her ladies, poor timid things, could scarcely keep up with her. At the hunters' meeting-place she served a light luncheon to the youth of the court gathered picturesquely about her carriage. Mercy objected: this was far too gay; but she discovered an unanswerable argument: the King approves. No one could ever stop her if the King approved. And there was at this time another kind of triumph for her. She thought it unfair to trample down the farmers' grain standing in the path of the hunt. There had never been so kind a princess. If a servant were injured or an angry stag attacked a peasant she would stop her carriage, bind the victim's wounds, provide him with the proper care. Court and country were enchanted. "What a good queen this will be !" When the price of food happened to go down in Paris the cry was raised: "The Dau-

phine is responsible!" She thought: How easy it is to be popular! What nonsense that to be successful one must be learned, serious, studious, and dull! Besides, she did read and talk of serious things (sometimes for an hour or two in twice as many days if there was nothing else to do) to conciliate those who nagged, to indirectly bribe them to let her off more easily when she could find amusement elsewhere.

One day the awkward Dauphin broke a piece of porcelain dear to his brother Provence. They clinched. Marie Antoinette, self-appointed referee, was scratched in separating them and Mercy told her not to breathe a word: that it would cause such scandal if royal brothers were known to have come to blows: a story she would have loved to laugh about. When she and the two rough noisy and untidy children of one of her *femmes de chambre* upset or broke furniture, tore clothes, laughed, and chased each other, turning a room upside down, Mme Etiquette held up her hands in horror, alternately lectured and tried to win the princess by cajolery; but her pupil laughed and managed to evade this symbol of pomposity. Disagreeable persons were shocked first by a little shabbiness in the Dauphine's dress; later on by her elaborately groomed perfection.

Her friends were thought to fit her no better than her clothes. Her first favorite was the duchesse de Picquigny who laughed at everything: at that dull naturalist the duke her husband; at gouty fat old dowagers, tight-laced, with long noses protruding from under towering coiffures, smirking and attempting to be charming. At eighty they had lovers. Mme de Picquigny laughed at emaciated rouged old roués so gallant and sprightly, so nimble on their old feet, so witty, full of pride that at eighty they had mistresses. The princess and the duchess rolled on the floor in ecstatic and abandoned mirth, breathless, aching with laughter, scarcely recovered from one attack when another fit of hysterics seized them. Some-

one whispering to the Dauphine frightened her: "What would the King say ?" She cooled toward Mme de Picquigny and moved through several minor friendships to Mme la princesse de Lamballe who was much less amusing but sentimental.

Friends were difficult to find and hard to keep, but the Dauphin was his wife's chief problem. In the presence of his brother and sister-in-law, Marie Antoinette once rebuked him for his crude ways and for his excessive hunter's zeal. He wept and ran away, she followed him consolingly, and when they returned he had the surprising grace to say that lovers' quarrels are short. She was inclined to exaggerate her influence over him and she was frequently urged to make her power more apparent. She wrote her mother: "He loves me very much, he will do everything I wish and all will be well when he conquers his embarrassment. Every day he grows more likable and all that is now lacking to my welfare is that I am not in the condition of the Queen (the pregnant Caroline) as I still hope and wish to be." Marie Thérèse had written: "Patience and gentleness must be your guide; no fretting. And since you children are so young, perhaps this delay is just as well." Marie Antoinette had also been advised to use *"un peu d' adresse,"* on the assumption that the Dauphin's timidity was the principal impediment. If she could stimulate his desire it would help him. But what effect was this to have on her ? She became nervous, being frequently aroused and never satisfied. If they were not to live together as man and wife, should they not spend their nights apart ? A secret passageway was built by which he might go to her room without the knowledge of the court, for she had been accused of unwifely conduct when a cold confined her to her room. Wise advice and bad were plentiful, and she blindly followed either not knowing which was which, or her own ideas, whatever at the moment they might be. What should have been natural and private was conspicuous, exas-

perating, nerve-racking in long months and years; and this uncertain state of things suggested to certain minds active and near at hand, knowing that any sort of sexual indulgence was an old story at Versailles, that Marie Antoinette must satisfy aroused desire in one way or another. Any marked friendship she might show to any woman must be proof of what these gossips said. The Dauphin gradually acquired an affection for his wife, and became aware of his shortcomings. "Do you really love me ?" "Indeed you need not doubt I do," she cordially replied. "I love you and I admire you still more." The essential difficulty none the less remained.

What were her resources in the royal family and were they of any use to her ? For a year and a half the influence of the aunts had been strong, led by the eldest, Mme Adelaide, a cold old maid, neither beautiful nor charming in her youth, and now devoted to petty intrigue as a means to power. The aunts were meddling creatures with no love for Marie Antoinette, little for each other, and they had but one hold on her: their taste for gossip and their cleverness in using her impetuosity for their own ends, turning it against their enemies whom they hoped would become hers. They had but one virtue: a brave devotion to the King. All else in them was shallow selfish pettiness and, worst of all, a love of vengeance and an easily wounded pride. They had much pretense of piety to hide their life-long disappointments, their loveless secondary lives at court. Marie Antoinette could not love them, neither could she love the Dauphin's brothers. The comte de Provence — known as Monsieur — was more subtle than the duc de Berry, but less dependable. His manners were courtly; he was vain, fat, pedantic, but occasionally someone called him charming. He never forgave his elder brother for inheriting the crown. The comte d'Artois was clever, racy, shallow, but like Monsieur in lacking loyalty to the heir apparent. Neither could Marie Antoinette love these princes'

wives who were both dull and treacherous; yet intrigue tried to set them up against her as possible rivals by whom to profit, though no amount of effort could reduce the insignificance of Madame (the comtesse de Provence) and of the comtesse d'Artois; not even the fact that they had children, congratulated themselves that the Dauphin had none, and dreamed of what would happen if he should die. They were prepared to set themselves against his heirs if he should have them, as if those heirs would be usurpers of their children's throne.

At first Monsieur found it useful to be attentively polite to Marie Antoinette; Artois arranged fêtes and dances, his presence made them gay; and since no one else was so successful a master of informal ceremony, she acquired the habit of letting him set the pace, the fashion in so far as, grandfather being still alive, he was free to do. The comtesses de Provence and d'Artois were useful chaperons, and the Dauphine's counsellors told her to cultivate the habitual companionship of these brothers and sisters. Among the cousins the duc de Chartres at first seemed agreeable enough. He danced well, he was very rich, he entertained elaborately and spent still more when he became the duc d'Orléans. But he inspired no affection, confidence, or esteem. The Dauphine viewed her cousins, sisters, brothers, aunts as social assets. It was clear to her already that this court might be amusing, but it could never be much more than that, and, for the moment, she asked nothing else.

Sometimes her relatives influenced her improperly. One day, returning to Versailles, a crowd acclaimed her at the gate, but she quickly hurried by and left the people with their appreciations only half expressed. "Why ?" asked Mercy. "There were so many of them," she replied; but he saw the aunts behind this answer. Afraid she would become too popular, they told her it was more suitable, more modest and commendable not to encourage public demonstrations. She

realized, before long, that her aunts had given her much unwise advice, yet later on she wondered how she could have avoided turning them, as she eventually did, against her. They had been unfavorably disposed toward this Austrian girl from the beginning; they captured her for profit; and when they lost her their new purpose became fixed, unshakable: to find revenge, to strike her in some vital spot which their keen watching would point out to them.

For the moment, applause for Marie Antoinette was loud in the court theatre where etiquette had heretofore restrained such insistent and exceptional clamor, and it seemed absurd to bother about whisperings in palace corners when such approval greeted her in public.

She had now reached a point at which she felt she could assert herself, certain of victory, in her first major encounter, for a battle had become inevitable. Her enemy was Du Barry. Choiseul, minister of foreign affairs, had fallen; and though the King's mistress was not alone responsible, the part she played had been enough to turn Marie Antoinette's dislike into definite animosity kept at first in prudent control except in conversation with the aunts. The Dauphin, never having liked Choiseul, felt no special grievance in regard to his disgrace, but he had had a talk with Marie Antoinette, their first confidential, really helpful interview, when they discussed the fact that for various reasons the essential nature of Du Barry's position had been kept from them. Knowing her at last for what she was, they agreed to act in accordance with that knowledge and as future developments might direct.

The princess knew that intrigues at Versailles were unavoidable, to be met at every turn, and she resolved to take a definite stand, to make no compromise whenever she could see her path before her as she now saw it. She had exposed Vauguyon, and she believed she could trust her instinct, for, from the first, she had disliked him. She also disapproved of the

duc d'Aiguillon, Du Barry's creature, successor to Choiseul, but she kept this resentment hidden, following the advice of Mercy who hoped secretly that if this minister were conciliated he might work for Austria's interests. And, to promote peaceful family relations, Marie Antoinette had tolerated d'Aiguillon because the comtesse de Provence inclined to favor him.

She discovered that many little annoyances were constantly arising. The ladies in the respective services of herself and of Du Barry came to tiffs concerning precedence in choice of seats in the court theatre, and it was irritatingly clear that in these disputes the Dauphine's entourage by no means usually prevailed. Embarrassments were thus added to the intensity of her feelings which were strong enough when, soon after she arrived at Versailles, she wrote her mother: "I love the King tenderly, he does a thousand charming things for me, but one can only pity his weakness for Mme Du Barry, the stupidest and most impertinent creature imaginable. Twice I found myself next to her at Marly, but she did not speak to me, and I did not exactly try to talk to her, though, when it was necessary, I did say a word or two. I shall aways treat her as she deserves." She thought her own observation had corrected her first impression of Du Barry that day at La Muette before she saw her at Versailles; she did not give due credit to her aunts whose skill had stimulated her dislike, nor to insidious courtiers, enemies of Du Barry but not friends of Marie Antoinette, who whispered suggestions of this woman's schemes.

There were other things which would have increased her resentment had they been brought to her attention. When the court returned from Fontainebleau, Mme Du Barry moved into newly renovated beautifully decorated rooms, whereas the Dauphine's suite had not been finished, due, it was said, to lack of funds, but really because all effort had been con-

centrated to fulfil the wishes of the King's mistress. This would have particularly annoyed Marie Antoinette, for later on, she was most impatient even of ordinary delays in the completion of alterations, and sometimes so angry as to cause unsatisfactory though expensive furniture to be knocked to pieces in her presence. Her vexation, except in its degree, was typical of Versailles where rebuilding was constantly being done and where those concerned demanded all imaginable speed, as if Versailles has just so long to live and could not waste a single day.

Still led by the aunts, Marie Antoinette grew more and more critical. She dared to tell the King one day that it was not *trop honnête* in him to go on one of his little trips to Saint-Hubert when Mme Victoire, suffering, ill, craved his attention, though none of his daughters ever took it upon themselves thus openly to criticize the King. Partly through jealousy of Du Barry's influence, partly through her own experience, the Dauphine had sensed in him a coldness and a selfishness which disappointed her, changed the opinion which she formed that day when she first saw him in the forest of Compiègne. She had failed to rule the King's heart as she had hoped to do. Sometimes he appeared irresolute, inclined to compromise to avoid immediate dispute; but in the long run, he invariably won his point, for he was as absolute as his great-grandfather, though with so much narrower a scope. He could suddenly awake from seeming sleep to say something wiser than his ministers had said in council with him; but at once he went to sleep again, forgetting to act upon his thought. He neglected to keep his people's love, and, losing it, vaguely wondered why they had once loved him for he had been indifferent to their love, indifferent to everything except the gratification of his senses. Marie Antoinette, seeing as she always did a personal cause for everything, judged Du Barry responsible for this characteristic of the King. She imagined

STEPHENS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA, MO.

MARIE ANTOINETTE

AT THE AGE OF ELEVEN, DANCING A BALLET

Anonymous portrait

that his heart would soften in the absence of his mistress, and it enraged her that she could not drive away the woman. She consoled herself with a refusal to bestow the deference which the creature claimed.

The Dauphine risked the irritation of the King in order to irritate Du Barry. She took her stand: she would not speak to her. A thousand threads of intrigue centred about this resolution, working for or against it. Could this princess be made to speak or be kept from speaking ? Her absolute answer was: "I will not speak." Then, one evening, Mercy having persuaded her to say one word, she was about to do so when Mme Adelaide, watching Marie Antoinette slowly approaching Du Barry, suddenly announced: "It is time to go. We shall await the King in my sister's room." The Dauphine blushed, turned her back to Du Barry, followed her aunt obediently, and was scolded by her for having attempted to speak, and later, by Mercy for having failed to do so. The aunts said: "The King doesn't really care whether you speak or not," but Mercy said: "He cares immensely," knowing that the King had begged this favor, had entered her carriage when she was following the hunt, had taken her on his knee, had tried to soften that set expression, to loosen that determined heavier lower lip as stubborn as the stiff upper one. Mercy repeatedly harassed the Dauphine, knowing well the disgraceful woman in question "who treats the King like an equal." Marie Antoinette was likewise besieged by the agitated interference of her mother to whom she wrote: "I am in despair at the thought that you believe all the false reports with which Versailles teems rather than what Mercy and I could tell. It appears that you think we wish to deceive you. I have many reasons [the reasons are the aunts'] for my opinion that the King himself does not wish me to speak to Mme Du Barry, although he knows I have refused to do so. If you knew, as I do, all that goes on here you would realize that

that woman and her clique will never be satisfied with a word, and that if you give her an inch she'll demand an ell. You may always trust me to pursue alone and unaided the course which honor points out to me."

At this the Empress raged. As if she had advised her daughter to act unworthily! Could the girl fail to see that this was not only a question of policy but that it was her duty to please that best of fathers? Did she think her mother approved of Du Barry? [Marie Thérèse referred to the woman as a despicable creature as soon as the King died.] Was Marie Antoinette unable to recognize that the will of the King was not a matter upon which his grandchildren had any right to pass judgment? The Empress had told her daughter to behave properly toward the aunts. Did that mean that she must take their advice invariably? Could a daughter of the Empress be so dull? A court is not the place in which to practice a code of ethics without respect of persons, nor does an intelligent human being believe everything that anybody says. This should be obvious even to a child.

At last, half persuaded, half weary of strife, Marie Antoinette threw into the air these words for Du Barry to take or leave, for they were tossed in her direction: "There are many people at Versailles today." The mistress was appeased; but the princess now reverted to her former resolution: "I have spoken once; I will not speak again. That woman shall never hear the sound of my voice." But, having spoken, she might speak again, for one day she naïvely said to Mercy: "I have prayed: 'My God, if you wish me to speak, make me speak. I will obey the thoughts with which you may inspire me.'" And Mercy, rising to the situation, pronounced a fatuous adulation: "The voice of your mother is the voice of God." He did well, for the effect upon the Dauphine was to cause her to address a few words about the weather to Du Barry. Then came another hardening of the arteries of utter-

ance, while the court was divided day after day into factions still attempting to make a princess speak or prevent her from speaking to a woman of the people for whom these courtiers cared nothing.

Now occurred an event which still more deeply fixed Marie Antoinette's resentment against both Du Barry and d'Aiguillon. The Empress had imparted to her daughter her very unfavorable opinion of Louis, prince de Rohan, and upon this point mother and child agreed. The latter was informed that Rohan had written a confidential letter to Louis XV who showed it to d'Aiguillon who showed it to Du Barry who read it to twenty people who joined her in the heartiest laughter. This was the letter: "I have actually seen Marie Thérèse in tears over the misfortunes of Poland [one of its periodical partitions] but this so skilfully impenetrable princess seems able to weep or not to weep at will, for with one hand she dries her eyes and with the other grasps her share of Polish territory." This letter, as truthful as malicious, was of course regarded as completely false and insolent by the Empress and her daughter, and when the news of its publicity reached their ears they were equally incensed at its author and at its numerous recipients.

Marie Antoinette soon heard that at Vienna Rohan had been spreading scandal in regard to herself; and, later, when he came to France she fought him ruthlessly, but in spite of her he became cardinal and Grand Almoner, and she defeated him only when even his disgrace involved her own.

And now, as if her hatred of him needed some coincident association, something suggestive of a distant future yet as undecipherable, as meaningless as warnings usually are before the light of subsequent contingencies has given them significance, there came an offer of diamonds, which Du Barry could persuade the King to give his granddaughter: an insult to pride stung by other instances of this creature's power.

Marie Antoinette, having all the diamonds she needed, refused these. She wanted more jewels — merely did not wish to get them by this means. But if ten persons knew she could be cautious, twenty were informed of indiscretions which she made no attempt to hide.

And in the meanwhile, again and again, Marie Antoinette persuaded herself that all was going well. She had been a marked success whenever she had shown herself in public. She knew that if she continued to be applauded, her mother, like most parents of disappointing children, would turn favorably toward a successful child. Old busy-bodies had nagged at her for going to a masked ball in Paris with the Dauphin and the Provences where she was recognized and from which she returned to Versailles at seven in the morning and heard mass before going to bed. Yet what of them ? The effect of her excursion to Paris was decidedly good, and there was enthusiasm over the presence with her of her husband. Gaiety increased; dances, fêtes were numerous, and they kept her away from politics and court intrigues more dangerous by far than late hours and superficial fashionable flirtations. In the palace there were concerts and private theatricals in some of which Marie Antoinette assumed light rôles, joining the troupe composed of royal cousins, sisters, brothers, which played exclusively for cousins, sisters, brothers, aunts, and King. Amusements continued to crowd out studies, and the Empress wailed; but Marie Antoinette, although she would not hear her mother criticized, knew well that Marie Thérèse lacked that sense of humor without which one could not understand life at the French court.

But the court, however entertaining, was not all one cared to know of France. To see and to be seen by Paris not at night in fancy dress but in clear daylight as the future queen, had long been her wish; till finally she wrote her mother:

"We have made our entry into Paris and received every imaginable honor; yet all this, though so gratifying, did not touch me so deeply as the eagerness, the tenderness with which the people, in spite of the oppression of their heavy burdens, showed themselves transported with joy at seeing us. When we walked in the Tuileries gardens there was at one time such a crowd as prevented us from moving for three-quarters of an hour. The Dauphin and I instructed the guards repeatedly to strike no one, and this had an excellent effect: order was so scrupulously maintained that in spite of the enormous gatherings that followed us everywhere, no one was hurt. Returning from the gardens we showed ourselves for half an hour on a balcony. I cannot tell you, my dear mother, how joyfully and affectionately we were greeted at that time. We waved our cordial response, and the people were greatly pleased. What a happiness for us to have gained their love so easily, and at the same time I realize that nothing is so precious as this love, and I shall never forget the experience of which I write."

The maréchal de Brissac had said: "Madame, with the Dauphin's permission, let me tell you: all the people in that great crowd are in love with you!" and the Dauphin had been the last to feel the slightest jealousy. Who should feel it, if not Louis XV, for there was the suggestion of desire for a new reign in this tribute to his heirs. Marie Antoinette naïvely yet with effective tact told the old King that enthusiasm for his grandchildren was a proof of love for him. And, in fact, a month later, in a Paris theatre there were cries of *"Vive le Roi"* upon the stage, with an after-thought of "his dear children, too." But actors for the moment seemed to be wholeheartedly royalist, not representative of a capital generally critical of the Louis to whom it had given the title "well-beloved" in years gone by. It was still the King and not the

monarchy in whom fault was found, and when the market-women cried that day in Paris: "Monsieur le Dauphin, be a father !" the tone of exhortation was respectful.

Naturally the effect of the Paris reception was to flatter Marie Antoinette and make her a little too self-confident. There is a dangerous tendency to be observed in her letter to the Empress: a tendency to conclude that since the people had been so easily drawn to her husband and herself, they would always be amenable. They had shown devotion when specially burdened and oppressed. Marie Antoinette did not realize that behind their demonstrations lay a prayer for the future which concealed a threat. She was sure that her small, spasmodic, incidental although cordial charities had been and would always be enough. She could not imagine either that a monarch's subjects have any right to criticize their ruler in an authoritative tone, or, for that matter, in any tone whatever, nor that it can ever be necessary for that monarch to fight in order to keep either the love or the submission of his people. Moreover she saw herself as she intended to remain, a child spoiled by the people and, in future, by the King her husband. Perhaps it would be easier for her and Louis XVI than it had been for their predecessor who struggled against persistent opposition to his pleasures which were, to her, the most important blemishes that marked his reign.

Meanwhile she might ignore criticism, scorn to be fretful over little jibes and comments not always ill-natured, arising from jealous sources. Insidious parallels drawn between her attitude toward gaiety and that of Du Barry could do her no harm. Old ladies like the aunts never understand youth; brothers and sisters often find petty, underhand methods of gaining foolish, malicious little triumphs of no consequence. Such things can only irritate a foolish girl too easily upset. No one drew depressing prophecies from a remark that per-

haps, after all, the new reign might not be all that France could wish.

Gaiety was still the order of the day, and even the disgraced minister could contrive to live as gaily as before. Chanteloup was more festive than Versailles. The banished but still rich Choiseuls were entertaining many of the Dauphine's future friends. The Choiseuls and their guests played comedies, floated in brightly lighted boats all night, as the Sun King's court drifted on the Grand Canal with laughter and lantern and song. The beginning of a renewal of such scenes by Marie Antoinette in similar settings was her leadership of royal relatives in walks through Saint-Cloud gardens where she was conspicuously the happiest person present, the happiest among the crowd with which the court mingled at these fêtes, singled out for warmest welcome, as if in future she were to reign in gladness, sovereign and subjects gaily fêting, fêted: a reign of lamp-lit nights and prosperous pleasure: a reign of peace, benevolence, and love.

Now, early in 1774, very near the old King's death, came a new note in her life. She had been fashionably flirtatious; then one night she met a charming youth, fair-haired, with regular features, blue eyes, tall, distinguished, handsome, lacking French vivacity and giddiness, whose manners were irreproachable, whose conversation was a little grave, whose air was rather melancholy. He was noble, high-minded, reserved; his attitude toward ladies was conspicuously respectful, modest, considerate. He had none of the shallow, brittle, elaborate conceit of the French courtier to whom he seemed dull and dreamy, sentimental, and simple. His sovereign Gustave III heard that his deportment was better than that of any other Swedish gentleman at Versailles, and that the royal family had taken a great fancy to him. He was two months older than Marie Antoinette, and older by a life-time in his discretion. She saw him on several occasions, chiefly at balls.

Something in him and something in her stood out for these two foreigners at this court. She had found a loyalty without magnetism in her husband and she noted the qualification in remembering the comte Axel de Fersen. She had found flirtation without sentiment in many instances at court, and friendship which was merely friendship, yet not all of it and nothing more. She had danced with others who danced as well, but with whom it was not nearly so delightful to be dancing. And she had had much more amusing conversation less than half as charming. In the four years before she saw this man again she did not forget him; she compared with him all those about her. He remembered her, she was Versailles to him, for he had observed each contrast she presented to all others at the court where no one else had pleased him.

A fatal illness struck the old King at the Petit-Trianon where, in fifteen years, Marie Antoinette heard the first sharp note of a far deeper monarchical knell. While his grandfather lay dying at Versailles, the Dauphin said: "I feel that all the universe is about to crush me." The royal family lived in hygienic seclusion while busy intriguers buzzed about the pestilential couch, daring infection in moments of indiscreet cupidity, and by no means awed by the approach of death. Only the daughters of the rotting monarch sat calmly, bravely, constantly nearby, thinking perhaps that to have entered that room would mean to share his fate, not realizing that unless they touched him or that which had touched him, they were safe. On the night of May 6th the courtiers gathered in a room adjoining that in which the King was to receive Extreme Unction. At that distance, but clearly enough, Marie Antoinette could see through a doorway in ghastly light the black, swollen, ulcerated face. Never, the old moralists enjoyed saying, was an unclean life so symbolized in a disfigured face; never was monarchy debased, disintegrating, so set in realistic

semblance before a court to which no warning had the slightest meaning and to which such interpretation would merely seem bad taste. With heavy breath the King prayed loudly, and it seemed to Marie Antoinette that he was being sanctified. He did not think of trying to give counsel to the children he was leaving on an unsteady throne. He merely thought of consolation for himself: "I pity my successor"; thought of all the dangers and the torments that he believed his soul must now endure; spent no last precious moments in idle dreaming of that great light created by the Sun King, and still burning, capable, though far less brilliant than in other years, of having lighted his great-grandson's dark inglorious way; but, fading, failing, threatening to leave two careless children to stumble, fall into a new world thriving upside down upon the grave of monarchy.

A little candle and a king went out together; and through the door of the Œil de Bœuf was sounded for the second and the last time at Versailles: *"Messieurs, le Roi est mort; vive le Roi!"*; and with a rush of hundreds of noisy feet on marble floors, the court laid siege to a door behind which a girl with nineteen years of inexperience had just announced to a boy with one more year of unpreparedness, the very questionable favor which set them both upon the throne of this kingdom called most beautiful on earth. The first act of the new king was to faint; and, on recovery, to throw himself into his wife's arms: "Oh God! Guide and protect us; we are too young to reign. You, my wife, will help me bear my heavy burden. I am deep in ignorance." These children trembled at the court's approach, as if it came to conquer them. The door swung open, and the court first saw its Queen with her eyes full of tears.

Marie Antoinette had said to Louis XVI: "I come to receive the commands of your majesty concerning our departure for Choisy." It was the royal will that all should hasten to

that more informal country place. Young faces at the beginning of the journey were set in solemn sadness, but in a little while a jocular remark was made, and, at once, everyone was laughing, everyone was gay. The court laughed before the old King was in his grave; the people hooted at the mass of infection, once a king, carried in shame at night, with as much secrecy as possible, without the solemn pomp of the Sun King's funeral, to the vaults of Saint-Denis.

The last of all the mistresses of Versailles' kings had left the palace, and the last of Versailles' queens was on the throne. Her momentary dizziness had passed, she felt the exhilaration of the power to command, and she resolved that hers should be the gaiest reign in the bright story of Versailles.

CHAPTER III

THE COURT OF FRIVOLITY

. . . . cet esprit d'imprudence et d'erreur
De la chute des rois funeste avant-coureur.

— RACINE

THE QUEEN and her ladies sit on a bench in the park at Choisy drinking milk and eating strawberries, very happy, very informal, very gay. The King, returning from a walk, smiles contentedly at the pretty picture they present. Near La Muette, the gates of the Bois de Boulogne are open, and the public walks freely, curiously, complacently about, watching the Queen who walks or rides with only one attendant, speaks graciously to everyone, graciously receives petitions thrust into her hands. The fresh May leaves are thick, the air is warm. Two princesses stroll in bright dresses on the grass under the trees or in the sun; one is delighted to be Marie Antoinette, the other to be the princesse de Lamballe. All Paris comes to see them and Louis XVI, *"le désiré,"* so-called in contrast to his grandfather.

"The Queen, as lovely as the day," writes an old courtier, "skilfully rides her horse in the Bois, smilingly meets the King, surrounded by admiring subjects enchanted at the absence of his guards. She jumps from her horse, he runs to kiss her forehead, the people clap their hands. He kisses both her cheeks, and the woods ring more loudly with applause." At La Muette the royal family dines cheerfully, informally together. The King has told his brothers not to call him "Majesty," and never have those brothers more willingly obeyed him. Along the Paris boulevards there is warmer greeting

just at present for the Queen than for the King, who has recently and temporarily exiled the duc d'Orléans and the duc de Chartres, friendly to that dull institution the old Parlement for which the people still have reverence. At Marly this summer the court is satisfied with simple pleasures, for there is still official mourning for the King whose death no one regrets. Old courtiers are a little shocked to see Marie Antoinette driving a cabriolet preceded only by one officer of the body-guards; but young courtiers notice how expertly she manages her horse; and they will be amused by her little carriage pulled by forty dogs. They tell her that it would be amusing to climb the hill at Marly one clear night to watch the sunrise. The King can see no harm in this excursion, but old courtiers frown and gossip whispers in the ear of France.

One partly serious thought the princess did express this merry summer. It would save money to transfer the headquarters of the court to Paris. Trips to the country could always be conveniently arranged. And there was another point — but this she did not use as an argument: Paris was more amusing than Versailles. But she said that Paris might love her if she lived in Paris still more than it would love her at Versailles. The Louvre could easily be refurnished and, perhaps, enlarged. She did not know that Colbert failed to persuade the Sun King to do this, but she succeeded no better in her efforts to persuade his descendant.

Marie Antoinette dismissed the thought easily, and found that mild amusements in the country must suffice, for the moment, to pass the time. She was busy planning a frivolous winter, for she knew the court would not long endure moderation, and she herself had waited long enough to inaugurate a reign of gaiety. The tiresome restraint of court mourning would be over with the year, a shortening of the prescribed period in response to tradespeople clamoring for the profits they

would make when the court began spending more money than the treasury could afford. The King was inclined to be good-natured about extravagance although his purposes were serious. He had read a little history and decided that France had been brought to the verge of ruin by women legitimate or illegitimate. Nevertheless he would snub the latter only. He would not even hear the name of Du Barry though she had gone to permanent exile. He agreed to let the court spend money. He forgot that the chief fault of the Du Barry clique was the extravagance the old King allowed. Marie Antoinette had been emboldened by the bright beginning of her reign, by the fact that court and people had applauded her small initial whims. That bit of gossip about the sunrise party at Marly meant nothing, for gossip was the air Versailles had always breathed, and it was not a poisonous atmosphere. People talked in stage whispers for a great French audience about the alleged sterility of Louis XVI; they said that Mme Victoire had had a daughter by her father Louis XV; they accused the Queen of France of enforcing the vaccination of the royal family, a precaution in which faith was generally weak, but all this talk had done no harm. On the other hand her popularity had made the people threaten to burn Maupeou in effigy for his alleged co-operation in various malicious little writings against her. Verses in her honor had been sung loudly and by many; and, above all, the King had found no fault in her.

Of him she wrote that he worked continuously with his ministers, was fond of economy, wished to make his people happy. "His tastes are not mine; his pleasures are hunting and manual labor. What could I do in a smithy ? I cannot be Vulcan, and if I played the rôle of Venus there I would displease him more than by amusing myself in other ways and places." Thus an economical monarch allowed his wife to be extravagant and ignored the inconsistency. Meanwhile

Marie Antoinette wrote her mother rambling letters about life at Versailles. "It is agreed that the late King left affairs in great disorder. Many persons are discontented, and it will be very difficult to please everybody here where everyone expects every request to be immediately granted. There is a false rumor that the King plans to spend millions on new buildings; another, that I am not sufficiently restrained and dignified. But the King and I are very good friends, and there is no cause for anxiety. I shall not lead him into reckless expenditure. I do not wish to meddle in intrigues, but to know what is going on, and to continue to hold the King's confidence, to help him when I can. I must admit I am too fond of pleasure, apt to neglect serious things, but I hope little by little to correct these faults. Though born in the purple, I cannot but be amazed that Providence should have placed me, the youngest of your daughters, upon the most beautiful throne in Europe."

Surely Providence has a sense of the fitness of things, thought Marie Antoinette. Surely "little by little" is not too slow a method of eradicating agreeable, youthful faults. Surely, too, my mother must see that I have a grasp of my problems. Artois is rash and giddy, but I correct his errors. Monsieur and Madame are not altogether trustworthy, but I do not give them my complete confidence. The aunts are dangerous, but no one can say that they rule me now. I have learned a method of evading the advice of Mercy and of Vermond which I need not tell my mother. They are always telling me to help the King. I listen politely, give light promises, while thinking of the approaching carnivals, gay festivities that have been arranged. Artois is silly, but his assistance in my plans is indispensable. He is rude to Louis XVI, steps on his toes, makes insolent remarks to ministers; but who can do so much as he to make a party gay? Monsieur has written objectionable letters of intrigue, but he has also written me

COLUMBIA, MO.

PORTRAIT OF MARIE ANTOINETTE

AT THE AGE OF THIRTEEN

Attributed to F. Wagenschoen

some pretty verses, and, with his dull wife, he is a useful chaperon when Louis is asleep. It is clear in these first months that we are making a better impression upon the public than Louis' brothers, and that, as yet, there is no marked criticism of the festive friendship which I grant Artois.

Louis XV had frequently entertained at stag suppers, etiquette having forbidden Queen and princesses to dine with men. To replace this sort of party, Marie Antoinette arranged suppers at which she presided and managed to please everyone, to quiet an otherwise unavoidable chorus of jealousies by inviting different guests at different times, thus eventually excluding no lady or gentleman who had a claim to such an invitation. It was generally observed with satisfaction that the King appeared to be acquiring a more social frame of mind, and his wife was confident that these functions would keep him from the possibility (remote in the extreme) of drifting into bad company so dear to his grandfather. Later on she laughed and said she wished that he would take a passing fancy to some woman, and learn to be a husband to his wife.

The war on etiquette had been declared, the first battle won, and Marie Antoinette ridiculed its laws while she prepared to break them. "Ask Mme Etiquette what I must do now," she laughed one day when she fell off her donkey. One wintry morning she sat cold, shivering in bed waiting for the stream of ladies, each more privileged than the one before, to stop and to allow one of them to present a shirt lest she should freeze in highest ceremony! Etiquette! Such nonsense belongs to another age and not to this one, the young court agreed. England, mark you, is not thus hampered; English ideas are fashionable here and they do not oppose the erasure of many scenes in this old comedy of pretentious manners, for there will still be many an act to strut through day by day. We hear much talk of liberty, but do Voltaire and Rousseau preach

etiquette? We may be more popular in France with less formality. Court and country were uncomfortable under the iron hand of Louis XIV, but there can now be greater ease and happiness for all, particularly for ourselves.

The first important innovation was a change in dress. That of Henry IV's time was becoming to handsome youth and unbecoming to the old and fat: a difference which perhaps would purge the court of aged sprightliness, aged clumsiness, or else they could be mocked. At any rate, this style was fashionable long enough to annoy certain people of importance. Then this perpetual fancy-dress grew wearisome, and the court shifted to another fad. High headdresses were not the Queen's invention but they amused her for a time. She saw one lady surmounted by an entire English garden; and the duchesse de Chartres on an ingenious framework balancing a miniature model of her son in the arms of his nurse accompanied by a negro page and a parrot pecking at cherries. The highest coiffures measured seventy-two inches, and in order that a person thus arrayed might pass from room to room with a pretense of dignity, doorways were heightened, for one could not be expected to bend double or sit down and slide. Finally one day the comedy played itself out when Louis XVI entered his wife's presence with his hair brushed up behind, a mode he said he wished to establish for the men at court. "Frightful!" laughed the Queen. "But," he retorted, "we must have a style of our own, and I hear that you are thinking of adopting a coiffure resembling that which we have worn." The King and Queen congratulated themselves on having frowned upon a harmless fad while they let certain dangerous court whims thrive.

The carnival turned out to be very gay, and Marie Antoinette spent many nights in dissipation. "The devotions of Holy Week," she confessed to a friend, "have wearied me and caused me to catch a cold as all the balls of the preceding

weeks have failed to do." An extraordinary person was admitted to the Queen's dances: the marquis de la Fayette. His advanced ideas had made him fashionable in spite of the crime of his having been in favor with Du Barry. Some called the Queen too democratic in thus countenancing a precariously modern young man, but she found another and more important fault in him — he was not a good dancer. It was fashionable to have a moderate store of new ideas, but never fashionable to be awkward on a ballroom floor, nor to be ungraceful on a horse. She called him M. Blondinet, laughed at the untidy state of his coiffure, and decided that such a man could never be of use to her.

When Louis XVI asked his wife to send an invitation to a friend: "He dances too wretchedly," she replied. "But," pleaded the King, "no one is more deficient in that respect than I, and must I be absent also ?" It could scarcely be said that he must, yet one always felt relieved when he went to bed, as he always did, at an early hour; for in spite of those specially invented suppers he had not acquired social grace; and the court dared to set the clock ahead to hasten his departure. At any rate, poor man, he was not jealous of the Queen's popularity. Early in the new year she went to the opera and heard the refrain: *"Chantons, célébrons notre Reine"* sung directly at her, followed by loud applause and an unheard of innovation: a repetition of the song amid loud cries of *"Vive la Reine !"* Her bows and smiles increased the demonstration. She wept for joy and wished the King were with her. She went often to the opera in Paris — it was cheaper and more amusing than to bring it to Versailles — and Paris once more gave her credit for economy, yet it was no secret that there were many plays in the theatres of Versailles, and occasional operas, all performed by actors from the capital. Much less expensive private theatricals included *Tartuffe* with Provence in the title rôle. It was played in royal privacy, and

played well, according to the King who, with a strain of prophecy in his malice, remarked of the performance that the actors were well chosen for their several parts.

No one liked the silly archduke Maximilien who came that winter to visit his sister the Queen of France. He annoyed the princes Condé, Chartres, and Conti who said that since this Austrian travelled in disguise it was his place to call on them. "No," said Marie Antoinette, angrily, "the King and his brothers have not stood on such unnecessary ceremony. Louis XVI has invited him privately to dinner with the royal family, an honor to which you, Chartres, have no pretension, I presume." This remark incited these cousins to such rage that the King decided not to invite them to the fête he gave at Versailles in honor of the foreigner. Chartres showed himself conspicuously in Paris, that night, and Paris sympathized with him. He would not forget the insult he had suffered nor its source: the headstrong Queen against whom his deep resentment was to be intensified. Marie Antoinette complained of him, of others; and one day she told Artois that his wife and Madame did not treat her with proper respect. "They should remember that I am the Queen and that I belong to the House of Austria: the first in Europe." But Artois, unlike Chartres, managed to turn aside this challenge: "I am glad to see that you are jesting and that therefore your annoyance is not deep." Yet rumors of one or two encounters of this sort were enough to arouse criticism, and France sang a little song:

Petite reine de vingt ans,
Vous qui traitez si mal les gens,
Vous repasserez la barrière,
Lonlaire, lonlaire, lonlaire.

A trifle, soon forgotten, for the Coronation was at hand.

Highways were repaired, bridges strengthened, one or two

gateways enlarged, for the ceremonial coach was huge and heavy. Among the people flocking into Reims came an obscure spectator: Danton. He walked all the way from Arcis-sur-Aube to see "how they make a king."

"The coronation," wrote the Queen, "has been the most perfect success, and the people seemed enchanted by their King; they interrupted the ceremony at the moment when the crown was placed upon his head, with the most touching demonstrations. I could not restrain my tears, and the audience understood my emotion." So deeply had the beautiful significance affected her that she had left her place, and when she returned there was the sound of approbation which the King had noticed. He had smiled at her, and, later he told everyone how greatly she had pleased him. "During the journey to Reims," she continued, "I did all I could to respond to popular acclaim. I do not regret my fatigue caused by the great crowd, the intensely hot weather which, incidentally, did not upset my health. What an astonishing and happy thing it is to have been thus heartily greeted only two months after the popular uprising, and in spite of the continued costliness of bread! It is a remarkable quality in the French character that it can let itself be carried away by incitation to revolt, and then return so speedily to order. Surely in having been so well treated by the unfortunate we are the more obliged to make them happy. The King appears to be impressed with a sense of this duty, and as for me, were I to live an hundred years I could never forget the day when he was crowned." Here again, as in describing her first visit to Paris, she expressed the conviction that all would be well with these French people. The riot she referred to had taken place at Versailles. The people had not been able to break through the palace gates. She was, however, to remember their return to obedience longer than her obligation to make obedience a lesser burden.

In the evening of this day at Reims, Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette walked arm in arm along the wooden gallery leading from the archbishop's palace to the cathedral, accompanied only by a guard or two, and letting all who would approach them. Smiling and gracious, happy they made happy this throng of subjects eager to let charming young royalty know how much France loved, how much France hoped for in this kind new reign. The people felt this promenade had been the Queen's idea; they thought she loved France and the King, they blessed her in their hearts, and they no more imagined they could lose their love for her than that in a hundred and fifty years Reims itself would be a ruin.

Marie Antoinette now wrote a letter to a foreign friend: "You will perhaps have heard of the audience I gave at Reims to the duc de Choiseul. You will easily believe that I did not see him without the King's consent, but you cannot guess the skill I used in order not to seem to ask for his permission. I acted my part so well that the poor man himself arranged the most convenient hour for my purpose. I believe that in this instance I have made good use of the power of a woman's right" — that *droit de femme* the exercise of which had been dinned so often into her willing ears by this courtier and by that. The King, however, was not so poor a man as she had thought. His wife had given the duke's friends an air of confidence they showed too soon. She did not tell her friend that at a reception at Reims which she believed would be a triumph both for her and for Choiseul, the King suddenly left the room; that next day, when the former minister came forward to kiss Louis' hand, the King recoiled with a grimace of disgust, and Choiseul crept away to Chanteloup.

The Queen did not confess that she had failed to place Choiseul, but wrote that she had ousted d'Aiguillon. "His departure is entirely my work; his evil practices had filled the cup of patience to the brim. This wicked man had entered

into all sorts of schemes of spying and of malice, and my hair stood on end at the mere sight of him." She had fixed d'Aiguillon in her mind as the cause of Choiseul's exile, concluding that Du Barry had played a minor part. This was not wholly true; but that he was a bad sort is undeniable. It is also certain that he became a bitter enemy of Marie Antoinette. She had been warned of this but he had angered her beyond endurance. Hostilities had broken out at the Revue de la Maison du Roi when d'Aiguillon at the head of his cavalry had approached the Queen's carriage. Just as he was about to salute her she had slammed the shutter in his face, leaving him aghast at this public affront. She had refused him permission to attend the coronation, announcing that she would take upon her shoulders all responsibility for this affair. The King had not effectively protested, though his feelings were less violent than hers. She would at once have exiled her victim to his estate in Gascony, but this measure had been blocked. Yet voices whispered: "Is this the gentle queen of La Muette? What has d'Aiguillon done to merit such severity?"; and when, later on, she felt for various reasons inclined to relent, she was accused of inconsistency.

Nothing, however, in these Choiseul-d'Aiguillon affairs, neither revenge nor inconsistency, so damaged her reputation as the momentary but definite attitude she had shown toward the King. Here, as usual, she was following the fashion, for it had become good form at court to laugh at Louis XVI. No one knew so well as she the many ways in which he was ridiculous. She wished to save her dignity by showing she observed his lack of it, and she could not understand why this was not attributed to her sense of humor instead of being called disloyal and malicious. A laugh at such an husband (in an age when matrimony was the continual butt of wit) ought to be regarded as an excusable outlet for all the pent-up nervous irritation which she suffered. One day she threw

little bits of bread in Louis' face in the presence of a group of men, and when the King asked the comte de Saint-Germain what he would do under such a bombardment, that redoubtable old warrior replied: "Sire, I would plug up the cannon."

One thing was clear to her. She was neither really interested nor successful in the field of politics; her business was frivolity. She wished to leave affairs of state to King and ministers from among whom d'Aiguillon's absence sufficed for her immediate satisfaction. She knew a certain Vergennes was in office, but she would not bother to find out anything about him for the moment, for he had not yet annoyed her. She made herself the descendant of Louis XIV and his great-grandson; she was the third and last great figure in the social history which was Versailles.

It was solely in this sense that she could act the part of Queen. Even critical Horace Walpole said that one could look at no one but her. "The Hebes, Floras, Helens, Graces are but street-walkers in comparison to her. Standing or sitting she is the statue of Beauty, and when she moves she is grace personified. They say she does not keep the rhythm of the music when she dances, but then it is the music that is out of time. Her behavior is as easy as divine." "Her features," wrote Mme Vigée-Lebrun, "are not regular; her face is the long Austrian oval; her blue eyes are rather small; the expression of her face is spirited and kind; her nose is pretty, her mouth is not too large, her lips are a bit thick. The most striking thing to note is the brilliance of her complexion, and brilliant is the word, for there is no shadow on that clear smooth surface." "Who can see the Queen without loving her ?" asked the prince de Ligne who saw her often. No queen had ever bowed a majestic head more graciously, nor honored with a smile, a look, a gesture each person according

to his distinction, with an economy of effort and an effective charm.

A LADY presented for the first time to Marie Antoinette must bow and kneel and start to take the hem of her dress as if to kiss it. But her majesty prevents the full completion of the gesture, for she gently disengages her robe with a touch of her fan, with a dexterity equalled by the courteous kindness of her expression. The regular ceremony of attending mass is particularly complicated every Sunday. A little before noon the ladies so privileged assemble in the room adjoining the Queen's, their *paniers* spreading wide. The doors are opened and all are admitted to the imposing presence, grouping themselves to right and left, leaving a free passageway. When the King is announced, the Queen advances toward him with an engaging air of deferential greeting. At a quarter to one the procession moves in the direction of the chapel led by various gentlemen who precede the King and Queen walking side by side, slowly, with a word for this courtier and for that among all those who stand in long lines flanking the avenue of the Galerie des Glaces. The floor is highly polished; one must not lift one's feet but glide over the smooth surface as her majesty is doing. She bows in as many directions and degrees as the importance of persons may suggest.

On solemn occasions such as this she moves with an incomparable, noble grace. In ordinary progress through the palace there is a more informal balanced ease, and an ingratiating welcome in her very step that suits a momentary lack of ceremony. At present the tall plumage of accompanying heads waves just below the higher headdress of the Queen, as, in a loftier sphere of grace and of distinction, she traces out the pattern of sovereign gesture. Ladies according to rank follow their majesties, they that are younger, prettier, and more fash-

ionable taking whenever possible the outer ranks to hear the compliments addressed to them as they pass in review before the court. In this array the company gains the chapel and spreads itself over the ground floor, facing the tribune at the rear where sit the King and Queen and princesses. After the gospel readings, Marie Antoinette makes Louis a low reverence, and the royal retinue returns in the order in which it came, leaving the service which has taken place behind its back to be continued in its absence.

Their majesties sit down to dinner at a small rectangular table in the first salon, side by side in large green high-backed chairs in front of the mantelpiece. They face an audience of princesses and duchesses on stools arranged in a circle, and of less important persons standing farther off or passing by in order. The King eats copiously, the Queen very little. Seated guests may take their departure when the King has drunk, and rush through the palace striving to outdo one another in paying court to members of the royal family who dine, conveniently, a little later. These duties done, they sit as still as possible at dinner in their own apartments and through the afternoon to keep their high coiffures in order, for they must be ready to meet at the Queen's gambling table at seven. She herself will be there promptly and will pass a purse "for the poor, if you please," into which are dropped offerings more begrudged than the far heavier losses about to be sustained.

This formal Queen, this Marie Antoinette so fond of informality, was still popular although fickle Walpole, a month after writing his high praise, added: "The charming Queen is gone out of fashion, and I am no longer in love with her." She was still enthusiastically received whenever she went to Paris, albeit she wrote her mother of an epidemic of satirical and libellous songs which spared no one, not even her husband

and herself. "However, though this sort of thing usually delights the French, our present affliction is slight, for the songs are so dull and coarse that neither the people nor the court has even been amused by them." Her reign was six months less than two years old, and still she perceived no danger in the free and easy tone of court and capital talking of the monarchy. There were sources of dissatisfaction which seemed to her much deeper. This fall there was so much grippe at Fontainebleau that the activities of frivolity were largely interrupted, and though Marie Antoinette was not seriously ill, the weather was too cold and wet for riding or walking while the palace sheltered an invalided court.

At the end of the year she had a financial problem. Her boxes of jewelery were well filled, and the King had recently given her additional ornaments, but still more diamonds beautifully set had been shown to her, and these she determined to buy. She thought she did not need to tell the King, for she would pay for them herself on the installment plan with her allowance. But in spite of an attempted balancing of her accounts — a process in which accuracy must have been conspicuously absent — she was forced in a few months to ask the King for money. He was not only generous but knowing her love for diamonds, he guessed her purpose. Moreover it cannot be said that, as a queen, she was always extravagant. She had but three dozen dresses every winter, as many every summer, and often her spring clothes were made over for the fall. When Napoleon was consul, Josephine owed her tradespeople more than a million francs; she had six hundred costumes at one time and thirty bonnets in a month. On the other hand, Louis XV's wife kept only half as many horses as the present Queen. But by whatever system of values the King may have been guided, it did not seem fantastic to pay his wife's comparatively moderate debts, and so he paid them several times. Gossip, however, said that Marie Antoinette

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asked Necker, not the King, for money, and was told that though the treasury could not afford it, he himself would give her what she needed, out of his own pocket; and that she willingly accepted Necker's aid; and therefore would take offerings from others. No one remembered that she had refused Du Barry's aid not long before. Here at this time there now appeared a woman, Cahuet de Villars who obtained by forgery large sums in the Queen's name. She was obviously a liar and a cheat and she was caught as creatures of her sort always are. Yet if her majesty had been careful and exact in money matters, would such a woman have had even a moment's credit? These rumors were remembered nine years later in connection with the Cardinal de Rohan and a diamond necklace.

Diamonds and diversions were pleasant playthings, but Marie Antoinette also wanted friends on whom she might depend and with whom she might play. Madame de Lamballe had proved disappointing. She was neither beautiful nor amusing and she was much too sensitive, too jealous, too fond of asking favors. She had been rivalled in the queen's affections by the lovely comtesse de Dillon whose sudden death had recently occurred. Now appeared the most exquisite, the most appealing of young ladies; her smile, her manners were enchanting; she had the soft angelic expression of a Raphael madonna; she could pose as model for the rising sentimental fashion, and, in addition, she was fond of frivolous society. Her lack of wit might be a sign of deep feeling, her lack of calculation a proof of sincerity. Gabrielle de Polignac was the friend for whom Marie Antoinette had longed, and whom she loved at first sight. She called her *"mon cher cœur"* and kept her finger on the pulse of this new organ which, she thought, the court had sadly lacked till now. The favorite did not ask for money, though she needed it; and when she made requests for friends and relatives, the Queen thought her disinterested.

With the best intentions, it was impossible to make her rich over night. For the time being she could be found in the princesse de Guémenée's rooms, and here the Queen followed her. Mme de Guémenée entertained expensively. She held the position and drew the salary of governess of the children of France who did not yet exist; she belonged to a powerful and ancient family; hers was not a spiritual nature, but she had visions and mysterious communications: other-worldliness mixed with court intrigue. Her husband lived with another lady; his wife with the duc de Coigny. The princess's friends were habitual and heavy gamblers; gossip was their creation and their conversation. Marie Antoinette had for some time attended the soirées, which for the sake of Mme de Polignac she would the more sedulously now attend. Mme de Lamballe was not at first alarmed. The Artois-Orléans group was regularly present at her functions, and for a while the Queen divided her time between the two rival hostesses. But it was soon obvious to the luckless Lamballe that the Polignac star was too bright for her, and she faded into semi-oblivion, still bravely true to the friend whom she had bored, but hoped to win again.

While Polignacs and their dependents gathered in a full harvest of comforts and privileges, the Queen basked in the warm light that she had made for them, blind to the nature of the influences exerted on her dear friend by a host of hungry profiteers; or, if she saw it, vaguely at first, more clearly as the days went by, she could forgive the faults of the people who amused her. She refused to rule them, for she imagined that she would be happy if she played with them on equal terms. She could not really be herself and wear a crown; therefore she took it off as often as she could. Still she was not always happy; "She never was completely so," observed the prince de Ligne who saw her frequently. She did not wonder whether a queen can hope for happiness who knows not how

to rule, but she regarded the satisfaction of successful rulers as a dull content that thrives upon complacent pride, upon the empty virtue of efficient, smooth routine. She could think without the slightest envy of her mother's competence. She would have preferred to be a Mary Stuart, to take the chances Mary Stuart took.

Marie Antoinette had formed the habit of letting boredom creep into her expression when conversation took a serious turn. This was, in part, her own reaction, and, in part, a fear by no means groundless that thoughtful talk would bore her friends who would then blame or punish her, as they had little ways of doing, for failing to force froth to hold its sway.

Although the Queen declined to rule her friends, she did occasionally assert herself. She would let gambling, conversation, and extravagance go too far, but she tried to draw a few faint lines beyond which certain persons might not venture. She was not really jealous, she chose her friends for their charm, their power to amuse. But if some fair-faced thing, no special friend of hers, had a complexion almost as lovely as her own and stood too often in a light too advantageous, one of the Queen's ladies would be instructed to tell the presumptuous beauty to hide a little less deeply the more becoming quality of modesty. Or else her majesty would bestow compliments so broad or make such pointed comments upon some strikingly clever detail of costume that all the court would turn to look, and the victim's blush would set the Queen's softer coloring in the desired relation to the enforced excessive vividness of rival hue.

Marie Antoinette learned to care for the personable intelligent girl nine years her junior who had not the special social knack of Gabrielle de Polignac. She was the King's sister, Mme Elizabeth, gay although indifferent to gossip and extravagance; infinitely more attractive than the King's brothers' wives; and she was loyalty itself. She helped to fill the time

ANONYMOUS PORTRAIT

About 1769

ENGRAVING BY LE VASSEUR

From a portrait by Krantzinger, about 1769

COLUMBIA, MO.

that even a Polignac could not completely fill. Yet, in spite of her assistance, in spite of all the activity of the court, Marie Antoinette had time for still more diversion. One day through the window of her gilded coach she saw three urchins walking down a dusty road. The royal carriage stopped; a white hand extended offered money, an old grandmother agreed to part with an attractive little ragamuffin. The court in amazement saw its Queen ushering into the palace an unwilling victim. He was washed, dressed, brought frequently into the presence of the first lady of France whom he greeted with tears and crude complaints, awaiting his revenge for every undesired favor. In twenty years he became a bloody terrorist, shedding his own blood, too, for the discomfiture of her who had adopted him, and whom he bitterly reproached for homesickness, forgetting to resent a grandpaternal avarice.

There was a great man who, like the adopted peasant child, found no happiness at court. Turgot had seemed sufficiently harmless when he became cabinet minister, and Marie Antoinette wrote her mother that he enjoyed the reputation of a very honest man. The King liked him and his associate Malesherbes. The court was indifferent only for a moment, after which Turgot announced that expenses must be reduced. He told the King that he must curb his natural generosity toward persons nearest and dearest to him. He thereby stirred up discord between King and Queen. He had been largely responsible for the doubling of her allowance, but she attributed all that credit to her husband. He had put down the riots that occurred before the coronation, but she felt they would have been suppressed by someone else if not by him; and even if a sense of these two obligations had been strong in her, she would have felt it counterbalanced by the whispered information that Turgot caused more trouble than he cured. Even the King had doubts: "Have we acted justly in hanging two of the recent rioters?" "Sire," replied the

minister, gravely, "do not forget the weakness brought Charles I to the block, made Louis XIII a crowned slave, and caused every misfortune of your grandfather's reign. It is said that you are weak." The King still had his doubts; but one thing was clear to him: "I see that only two men love the people truly: Turgot and myself." The former also loved the monarchy. "Give me," he asked, "five years of despotism, and France shall be made free."

Meanwhile, in default of absolutism, he worked as best he could; he lifted many cruel taxes from the people's shoulders; yet courts are harder to reform than governments, and a storm gathered in the palace. The leaders of society had objected to any moderation in the scale of entertainments. Now they complained ten times more loudly, for the comte de Guines, a good friend of the frivolous, a very wretched, some say dishonest ambassador to England, had been attacked. Turgot had merely seconded the motion made by Vergennes that Guines should be recalled. No matter. Turgot had made inroads on incomes which Vergennes had left untouched, therefore all the blame rested on Turgot, and the court said: "He shall fall." It set a trap for him: one courtier was to sound old Maurepas; another to take the Queen in hand to move the King. Marie Antoinette at first made futile efforts to be impartial, but she was the easy prey of prejudice, her own and specially her friends'. They laid bare her wounded vanity, reminded her that her friend and theirs, the comte de Guines, had been insulted by Turgot with impunity. Indignation worked her up to an hysterical state of nervousness in which, relentlessly, tearful and violent by turns, she nagged the King. One day, Turgot having refused to grant a friend of hers a lucrative position, she resolved never to speak to him again. Louis was harassed by various delegates who blamed Turgot for many ministerial mistakes. The irreligious said he ignored religious issues; they knew Louis to be conventionally

as well as conscientiously devout, and hoped he would save large incomes which unsaintly priests whom he thought saintly had been enjoying. Wavering Louis wondered if his friend might indeed be too radical; even Malesherbes had some such thought; and Provence, speaking hypocritically for the clerical party, called Turgot the scourge of monarchy. Antagonism rang in wider circles, making enlightened Abbé Galiani say: "The man is ruining manufacture." Meanwhile the great reformer, stung by opposition and destructive criticism, grew cynical, desperate. "Can they not see," he cried, "that their one hope lies in these remedies ?"

But clashing cliques and greater forces were as blind as the most frivolous member of a frivolous court. The old Parlement, the bourgeoisie, the clergy, groups of common people all attacked him; the exasperated prince de Conti whose perfidious compromise the minister had spurned, became one of his bitterest enemies; two of the monarchy's most trusted counsellors had learned arguments against a man whose power they envied: Vergennes wanted war to help America against England, France's foe, and Turgot thought the gain not worth the cost. Maurepas, fearing the Queen who feared her friends, was tirelessly persistent, and at last the King turned from his cabinet minister and listened only to those who loathed reform. A great man had fallen, another was broken-hearted. Voltaire had believed that Turgot could bring about a golden age. But Marie Antoinette thought Turgot's dismissal too mild a punishment for insults suffered by the comte de Guines, and in a fit of fury she demanded Vergennes' disgrace, and insisted that on a certain day Turgot should enter the Bastille and Guines be made a duke. Fortunately her most fantastic follies were forestalled: Turgot was not imprisoned; Vergennes retained his office; and it was considered ludicrous enough to have made a silly count a duke. She wrote her mother: "I am not sorry that Turgot and Malesherbes have

gone, for they had displeased everyone; but I had no part in their fall." This is as false as it would be to hold her entirely responsible. She had previously withheld information from Marie Thérèse; now she definitely lied to her, although, no doubt, if questioned, she would have said that, writing hurriedly, she had scribbled "no part" as an abbreviation for "no decisive one."

Meanwhile carnivals continued to be more important in her life than Turgot, or Necker, or France. She still enjoyed opera balls in Paris, returning to Versailles just before dawn, starting out again that morning to attend a horse-race near the Bois de Boulogne. She caught several colds, was nervously tired; but it would have done her more harm to spend her time interfering in affairs of state, and she would not have been happy as a virtuous nonentity like Louis XV's wife. It was said that early one morning Marie Antoinette found the palace gates locked against her. The King had dared to play a practical joke. She finally persuaded a guard to admit her, and storming into the King's presence, warned him not to try that sort of thing again. Many little annoyances beset her. Madame sometimes made excuses for staying at Versailles when asked to chaperon her sister at the Paris balls, and thereby caused criticism of a queen who, failing to find a proper escort, made the best of someone else. She attended dances at the Palais-Royal, residence of Orléans, to which one day the papers announced that she had been "invited." Mercy was horrified. He said a Queen might honor with her presence such an entertainment, but ought not to "accept an invitation." It was said that at masked balls she could not be distinguished from other ladies, yet if she had worn no mask there would have been still more gossip. If she leaned from her box to whisper something to a friend, she was accused of flirting. If she flirted, someone remarked that he had seen her give her hand to a man who kissed it and caressed her

arm. She enjoyed going to the races, and sometimes she went on Tuesdays when she should have been receiving ambassadors at Versailles. Thereby she angered the old courtiers and diplomats; but if she had remained at Versailles she would have annoyed Artois; and she had been advised to conciliate the brothers of the King. Artois saw no reason why she should not come down from her belvedere at the Plaine des Sablons and walk about among the people, but Versailles was horrified.

After the day's sport, he took her to the Château de la Muette where his dances lasted all night, and where the company was sometimes more amusing than aristocratic. But he also found it easy to fill his rooms with titled persons who shared his views. He was unfaithful to his wife, but did not expect her to be true to him, and when he heard she had a lover he remarked: "I pity the poor man."

The Queen began to be sternly criticized for making such a friend as she appeared to do, of such a prince as Artois most unquestionably was. Gossip ignored her queenly air, her alleged demand that she be treated constantly with all respect, for her indiscretion had been glimpsed behind her mask in public, and no one knew how far she might not go behind closed doors. Courtiers, meanwhile, except the friends of the Queen's favorite, grew discouraged, for none but the protégées of Gabrielle de Polignac received gifts from Marie Antoinette. Versailles grew less gay and the Queen, noting this, went more and more to Paris, wondering why palace functions were not always well attended. Moreover, at the end of another carnival she had not thoroughly enjoyed late hours of dancing, gambling, and the rest. She was perceptibly depressed and irritable, more easily exasperated by the tongues that waged a nagging war, by the incessant jealousy and avarice of the court. Yet if these things annoyed her, others would still more. No, she must play this game. Perhaps she was a little tired, merely. Perhaps the next carnival would be a better one. Dis-

sipation was a habit fixed for her, and by contrast, her short fitful spells of serious reading or of music lessons seemed more and more futile, more and more boring, unendurable.

Sometimes accumulated vexations found vent in violent outbursts and passionate resentment. One day she summoned the old minister of war, the comte de Saint-Germain: "It is enough that I am interested in a man; you promptly persecute him. Why do you send Esterhazy's regiment to Montmédy, an undesirable post ?" and, without waiting for an answer: "See that you find him another garrison." "But, Madame," replied Saint-Germain in fear and distress, "all arrangements have been made. Can one require that an old regiment give place to a new one ?" "As you please," she cried, "so long as you give Esterhazy satisfaction." She turned her back upon the old soldier, he crept away, and she pulled back the curtain behind which she had hidden Esterhazy. He was a good officer, but there had been no need for such a tempest. Later, when by various causes the comte de Saint-Germain had been replaced by the prince de Montbarey, another appointment called forth another scene. "For an hour," said the new minister of war, "she poured out abusive and unjust reproaches, her fury steadily increasing, her loud voice drowning in my consciousness a storm that raged above the palace." Suddenly she retired, slamming a door so violently that it trembled on its hinges. This was loyalty to a friend. Then, six weeks later, finding herself to have been in the wrong, she sent for Montbarey, her smile as charming as her frown had formerly been black, for now she wished him to see how willingly she would admit an error. "I have summoned you here that I may acknowledge my mistake in this place in which I did you wrong. I am in despair, I pray you to forget the injury, to know that the King and I will do all we can to ease your mind of it." She explained that her eagerness to help her friends often led her into hasty misunderstandings.

Yet she seemed to have made no definite resolution to examine dispassionately in future the merits of other cases. She would continue to think her friends were in the right, and her generally nervous state of mind combined with her natural, ready sympathy would upset the balance of her judgment. Above all she showed no comprehension of the importance of this distributing of military offices. She had objected to Du Barry's system of favors, yet her own was of the sort: a reward of personality rather than of merit.

At last, after much delay, came a wiser brother than Maximilien, the "enlightened" Joseph II, Emperor while his mother was still Empress. She hoped his visit would promote the welfare of her daughter. He had two secret missions: to make Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette man and wife, and to study France itself. The Queen was ignorant of these purposes, but she knew the Emperor came to chide. The King, the Queen, the Emperor dined one day in the apartment of Monsieur and Madame with the comte and comtesse d'Artois. Louis and his brothers chased each other around the room, threw themselves on sofas, played childish games, while Marie Antoinette wondered timidly what her brother thought of this, but he paid no attention. Perhaps he knew these sports were still popular at Versailles though Madame told him she had never seen her husband so disorderly.

Joseph II was at first chiefly critical of his sister's friends, particularly of the princesse de Guémenée, and of the fact that at her gambling table, in the Queen's presence, this hostess's honesty was openly questioned. He was astonished to learn that she attended the races and walked among the people at the Plaine des Sablons. What he most severely censored was her mockery of the King. Joseph could see the weaknesses of Louis, but he walked and talked with him in the gardens, won his confidence, and finally persuaded him to undergo the slight and oft-suggested operation — *se faire couper le filet* —

to be circumcised without delay, inasmuch as it was clear to anybody that Marie Antoinette should have a husband and France an heir. Long talks the Emperor had also with his sister, and sometimes heated arguments, for though she often seemed convinced that he was right, she rallied to the defence of her best friends. On the whole her success in this encounter with her brother was greater than she had thought possible. He loved her, she won him, and he was surprised by what he called her cleverness, her penetration, her occasional wisdom. As a hostess she had charmed him. One night in his honor the court in brilliant dress, grouped about her, moved for the hundredth time to sounds of song and laughter in the soft beauty of illumined gardens lovelier than any scene of Austrian festival; and, for a moment, he forgot the faults of this frivolity, and almost wished that he might live as Versailles lived. "I have passed hour after hour with her, not knowing how the time flew by so fast, and it required all my strength to say good-bye. She is good and she is charming; a little thoughtless, but with a basic sense and worth remarkable in one so young. Her first instinct is her proper guide; if only she would let it rule her, listen less often to all those swarms of persons who put ideas into her head." Thus, in a sentimental mood, he left her; and she forgot their quarrels: her nerves were, for the moment, quite unstrung, and she retired to the Petit-Trianon with Mmes Polignac and Lamballe to help her stifle an attack of homesickness.

Not only had the Emperor enjoyed his visit — France had enjoyed it too; and he had ridden a wave of popularity on the crest of which his sister had once sailed. He knew that his success had been in part the product of his bluff, for he had posed as gay king and as *philosophe* — magic word — a fashion Marie Antoinette would never follow. France, usually the victim of Austrophobia, wished that its King resembled Aus-

tria's Emperor; it did not know that Joseph came to study a rival country.

Marie Antoinette thought once or twice of his advice to her, but the court still contrived to rule her easily. As for the King's brothers, whether or not they had the Emperor in mind, they toured the Provinces. But Artois went haughtily and extravagantly with a great suite, spreading impressions of what Versailles must be, and what its Queen, this man's companion in and near the capital. Monsieur travelled in insidious inconspicuousness, trying to turn the nation's favor toward himself. When Artois returned, the Queen was with him more than ever, and he was more than ever foolish. He determined to have his château of Bagatelle rebuilt by the time the court had ended its regular autumn visit to Fontainebleau, so that he might give her majesty a fête on her way back. Eight hundred workmen were pressed into service and wagonloads of stone were seized upon the roads, paid for by force, for in no other way could Artois collect the requisite material with the necessary speed. The court at Fontainebleau, meanwhile, was more than ever costly, though the King had given up the accustomed summer trip to Compiègne, pleading a scantiness of funds, yet feeling bound to hand out many thousand francs to pacify the disappointed tradespeople of that town. Such was the economy of the King. The following winter at Versailles, in spite of him, was most expensive, and Marie Antoinette extremely indiscreet. One day when the snow had fallen thickly, she wrapped herself in ermine becoming to cheeks red with rouge and cold, and in her blue sleigh pulled by two white horses in blue harness set with gaily jingling bells, she flashed down the Paris boulevards. The people murmured: "What queen has ever driven so wildly ? Where are her guards ?" They did not know she thought the ice too slippery for a mounted escort, and they

would not have believed her had they known. The bells were silent as she slipped through the gate of La Muette, and as she stepped across the snow, reflecting lights that shone through Temple Palace windows, the dark Tower just beyond. The comte d'Artois was in his temple; she played with him, with Chartres — *Egalité* to be — with others whose friendship would last as long as her prosperity. There were salons full of brilliant people who might be no less loyal than these fops in days to come; but what could these great talkers think of saying to their Queen ? No one at court cared for the *philosophes* of whom these intellectuals were so fond. The Queen skimmed across the snow and danced while Paris talked. She, too, would talk, perhaps, when she grew old. She laughed when she thought of old ladies and gentlemen in their stiff salons, sitting all night talking, talking, talking.

There was, however, one *philosophe* who stirred Marie Antoinette's imagination, for in all France there was no fashion quite so brilliant as the fashion of Voltaire. The King of Versailles had not half so many devoted followers as the King of Paris. The Sun King had called himself the State, but now Voltaire, with at least no less truth, could proclaim: "I am France." He would not decline to go out to Versailles; and Marie Antoinette, they say, desired to greet him properly in some way that would give her opportunity for a fête. She would have found a moment's pleasure in seeing this phenomenon, the eighteenth century personified, though tainted with the infection of ideas called new. She could have quoted his wit, enjoyed the gossip of her friends touching his reputation odious to aged orthodoxy. Possibly she remembered flattering verses that he once addressed to her, and his remark: "I have always had a violent passion for the Queen." She could not, at any rate, open Versailles' gates to him, for the King disliked men who criticized the church, and Marie Thérèse wrote her daughter that Voltaire was dangerous; more

to be feared, she thought, than Austria's interests. The Queen discouraged, or as some say, convinced against him, gave up all effort in Voltaire's behalf. Thus, through prejudice and misguided judgment, the King and Queen neglected another man who might have helped to save Versailles. The Queen and others had dismissed Turgot; the King and others shut out Voltaire.

On the night of Voltaire's triumph at the Comédie-Française, the Queen and Artois went to the Opéra. He disappeared to catch a secret glimpse of the hero of the hour, and sent the captain of his guards to congratulate the author of *Irène,* who replied: "Do you wish to kill me with your kindness ?" The Queen stayed at the Opéra; perhaps she was afraid to go with Artois though she had done more dangerous things with him. Paris, for the moment indifferent to her, turned its back to Versailles, and watched Voltaire as if it knew he was to die next spring.

Six months later Paris faced westward when it heard at last that the Queen was with child. There had been rumors of her pregnancy last year, followed by news of a miscarriage caused by her attempt to close the shutter of her coach. Paris, like Walpole, had little faith in "conceptions that had so long been immaculate"; but now it was repeated that Marie Antoinette had complained to his majesty that one of his subjects had kicked her violently in the stomach; and Paris jocularly pondered on the realism of modern legend. Marie Thérèse now hoped the King of France might be led by the increased influence of his wife to treat affairs of Austria more considerately. The Queen paid more than ordinary attention to her health these months; did not often gamble very late at night; spent much time watching preparations of her child's wardrobe; admired the tortoise-shell cradle in which Henry IV once rocked. The comte d'Artois and duc de Chartres, to amuse themselves, the Polignacs, and incidentally, Marie An-

toinette, arranged informal, unconventional breakfasts; and, one day, persuaded her to go to the rendezvous of the hunters against the doctor's advice, but no harm was done. At Marly in October she invented a private café where her friends ordered refreshments, discussed the latest scandals at which Marie Antoinette still laughed when they credited her with lovers. Though the court pretended at this time to humor her, she was annoyed to find that her condition did not spare her the persistent demands of Lamballe, Polignac, Austrian relatives, and other profiteers.

In a crowded palace room two dirty little urchins had climbed upon the mantelpiece to see a Queen in labor. In Paris the people filled the churches, praying for the mother, forgetting for the moment their criticisms of the Queen. The preposterous crowd in this absurd delivery room which etiquette decreed; the lack of air, although the King broke a window with his fist; the Queen's efforts not to show her pain; her fear that it must be a still-born child that did not cry immediately — these things were alleged causes of convulsions which the sovereign remedy for all ills, the inevitable bleeding, was said to have controlled. Therefore in spite of etiquette and doctor, she survived. Even Mercy was happy for he thought that love for his daughter would make Louis love his wife the more, and therefore give Austria whatever she might ask.

The Daughter of France was baptized by the Cardinal de Rohan: an incongruous function of blessing in this man who dreamed of an earthly laying-on of hands that would not sanctify the Queen. In a splendid coach the sovereigns, Provence, and d'Artois, surrounded by every detail of prescribed ceremony, visited in solemn majesty Notre Dame and Sainte-Geneviève. They dined at La Muette, returned that evening to Versailles, remembering that sections of the crowd had been silent, more curious than elated. Perhaps the face of d'Artois

there again so near the Queen's annoyed the people. He had not enjoyed the day, for he had hoped the King would never be a father. It was a girl; but she would soon, no doubt, be followed by a boy. Marie Antoinette wept that night, wondering why her subjects had so little love for her; wondering if France would cheer her heartily if she had a son.

She talked and wrote about her daughter, and the indifference of France did not turn all her happiness into sorrow. But since the most attractive child cannot occupy all of an attractive mother's time, and since there are hours when the worst of babies are asleep, and days when incessant repetitions of nothing are sometimes wearisome, it is not surprising that Marie Antoinette reverted to a life of gaiety. She and the King, disguised, were recognized at a ball in Paris, where, it was absurdly rumored, various ladies honored by his attentions made her jealous. A week later, scandal said she had induced him (for this and other reasons) to remain at Versailles, for she and the princesse d'Hénin had planned a specially gay evening. They stopped at the duc de Coigny's house in Paris, where, to envelope their identity in a thicker veil, they were provided with a private carriage. This conveyance broke down, and they were obliged to wait in the nearest shop till someone procured for them a public vehicle. When they reached their destination the Queen said to her friends: "Imagine me in a fiacre!" The King when he heard of it, laughed loudly too. But Paris said: She admits this thing. How many others does she not admit?

Another turn of opinion annoyed her. The duc de Bourbon had quarrelled with the comte d'Artois, and after listening to her friends, Marie Antoinette took the side of her brother-in-law, though she knew him to be unpopular. The public favored Bourbon because it hated Artois, and when these two noblemen were seen in theatres, the audience made their preference clear in the Queen's presence. Her pride was hurt, and

for a time she would not go to Paris. Artois learned nothing by experience. He called Louis King of France *et avare* because he would not pay the millions that his brother's debts required, ignoring as hypocritical or fanatical the answer of the Roi de France et Navarre: "I owe my people these vast sums." Again the public angered Marie Antoinette by applauding the duc d'Orléans when she helped to prevent his being made Admiral-in-Chief of the navy, a position he did not deserve. The people did not yet love Orléans, but they resented every sign of the Queen's power.

In the warm evenings of earliest autumn, the Queen and her sister-in-law had taken up again the habit formed in other times of pleasant weather, of walking on the great terrace where the public wandered, and where, it was objected, royalty lacked elbow-room when promenading in this way. But better order was now maintained, and court no longer jostled against crowd, though Paris talked of its familiarity and indiscretion. It was remembered that the court one year played hide-and-seek unchaperoned; that titled but unmarried couples ran laughing into leafy bosquets where they lost their way or found it pleasant there. The Austrian princess had been with the courtiers. Now the Queen walked with them at night in the gardens. France had been silent when three daughters of the Sun King strolled through the grounds of Trianon after everyone had gone to bed. But France was no longer silent. The military bands were playing; lights in the palace windows, brightening the wide terrace, melted into the shadows of the trees. The court and crowd moved happily in the warm evening air; the crowd was happier, freer than the court. Nameless couples wondered in the obscurity of the narrow paths, but jealousy and malice would not allow a queen this freedom. "I gave her my arm, her gaiety was charming, we overheard conversations, we ran, indeed, some risks," wrote the prince de Ligne who said that this noc-

MARIE ANTOINETTE

IN 1770

Portrait attributed to Frauenberg

turnal innocence was too delightful to fail of misinterpretation. Warm evenings grew cool, night thickened at an earlier hour, rainy weather came to the aid of gossip, and the park was empty after dark. But memories of these scenes still haunted France. Tales were told of Queen and court still less discreet in palace rooms than in the gardens, but she could read no sign of danger, neither could her friends whose scanty wisdom was to be her guide, certain of prosperity through their control of her. She loved and feared, grew weary of this court but she would always miss it when it was no more, and always long for it except when moments of profound emotion held her fast. Her court had framed the gaiety of her youth, the happiness of personal success, the luxury of wasted opportunity; and she was to forgive the sorrows it had brought her, and those that it was still to bring.

Nevertheless in spite of all its censure, the nation was but partially aware of the significance of one vice which overshadowed, typified, and summed up all the actually existing vices of the court. Versailles was the chief gambling house of France. But gambling games had been going on for centuries. There were, as recently as an hundred years ago, surprising moments at the Sun King's table when men loudly swore, the players seemingly beside themselves; the old familiar game, however, still went on. Fifty years before Marie Antoinette arrived in France, gambling was called the cause of all its woes, and yet the game, uninterrupted, still went on. Louis XV, gambling on a stability that should survive him, proved the accuracy of his guess. The court of frivolity gambled still more heavily on that stability — too late. Money lost at cards was merely one of the manifestations of this sport. One gambled on a race-horse at the Plaine des Sablons as one gambled on a Polignac at court. It was the fashion to gamble, one's friends gambled; fashion and friendship were the trump cards played against the Queen.

Never before the reign of Marie Antoinette had heavy gambling been permitted at her majesty's table. She had played for pennies under her mother's eye the year she left Vienna. She had played for larger but still small sums in obedience to Louis XV, not because she liked the game, which, none the less, by constant practice had become a habit. Now it had become a necessity, its zest was always keen, particularly with the growing costliness of chance. At first she donated her winnings at safe and tame *jeu de commerce* to charity; later on she needed her infrequent gains to offset heavy losses, for she played only *lansquenet* and *faro,* and the court would not play moderately. One fall at Fontainebleau, urged by her friends, she asked the King to summon the professionals from Paris. He granted a single session most reluctantly; play began one evening, lasted all night and well into the following morning. Then came a pause (for even one session must have its intermission) and then the game went on again until the morning of All Saints' Day and all unsaintly scandal. "You are good-for-nothings," laughed the King in futile good humor, and permitted the court with its Parisian cohorts to take another sporting chance within a fortnight, for Fontainebleau had always been the place of greatest dissipation every year. When one night, as usual, the King had retired at an early hour and play had soared to interesting heights, he suddenly returned. A royal gesture swept a fortune off the table as an offering for the poor. Next night the stakes were higher than the night before, and so the game went on, and Louis could not see impending ruin, but, holding up his hands, asked: "What more can I do ?"

Marie Antoinette had written her mother that she played only at her own table. She did not tell her — why worry the poor lady ? — that she played in various rooms of friends, that etiquette was banished, that one might stand or sit in the presence of the Queen who had lost all her November

allowance before the end of October. Had she at stake no greater sums than monthly pocket-money? The Empress sensed a deeper risk; she had her customary attack of trembling for her daughter's future, but the game went on — the game that Queen and court were playing against France — the game that had been going on for centuries — the game which monarchy had always, in spite of temporary losses, won. Therefore it was not apparent madness which had overtaken Queen and court, for they had wagered all upon the accustomed luck which had repeatedly, successfully, been taken by the monarchy for granted.

CHAPTER IV

THE PLAYER QUEEN

. . . cette paix que je cherche et qui me fuit toujours.

— RACINE

IT WAS MADNESS not to see the growing menace in the jealous eye of France peering resentfully over the garden wall enclosing the playground of a queen. Yet there had been other places of amusement within the circle of this royal park, and France had been gazing at them for years in anger but in helplessness.

The Sun King had his Trianon, linked to grandeur by the right arm of the Grand Canal. He had his hamlet, held fast to that opposite and formal shore. His great-grandson planted shrubs and trees that came from distant lands in the area that extends behind the great Trianon to the little one, the chef d'œuvre of Gabriel and Pompadour, not finished till the reign of Du Barry; awaiting then its fully framed and ordered functions, its short life, its centuries of fame.

When the old King and Du Barry lived in the Petit-Trianon, the Dauphine longed to call that place her own. Now they had gone, the Dauphine was the Queen, and she was encouraged by Mme de Noailles and Mercy to obtain the small domain. Louis, as usual, approved of his wife's schemes. She planned her alterations and at once scandal, aided by Mme Etiquette and Mercy, followed her. It was said that she called the little Trianon "New Vienna," after planting groups of trees and flowers from Schönbrunn; and that vast sums of money were being spent. Louis XV's trees were transplanted in the *Jardin du Roi,* in order that from these flat acres, built-

up mounds, and hillocks might provide the setting for a stream brought in pipes from Marly to an artificial precipice. Thence it flowed slowly round an island where a little temple sheltered Cupid; then twisting, turning, passed lazily under many bridges, by a Chinese pavilion below a belvedere on a flowered hill where the Queen ate her breakfast on a marble table. In a ravine below the hill there was a cool mossy grotto where she was to spend her last hour at Trianon. Her garden was of the fashionable, informal English variety described by Rousseau, copied in secluded corners of the great estates of Condé, Chartres, and Ligne, and specially in the Bois at Ermenonville and in the Caraman place in Paris. The Queen had visited this last example, gathered flowers and ideas and brought back Caraman himself to help her, not without arousing jealousy in the minds of Versailles' architects and supervisors. In all this her purpose was to get away from stiff Le Notre, to return to what was then called nature. Her garden was her own, for she had had free play, had made it testify to admirable taste. There were perhaps too many flowers, but no other fault except expense.

Château and gardens were not enough; the Queen had heard that no French estate could be complete without a village, and she saw no reason why the King could not afford what a nobleman could buy. Her village was prettier, more famous, but not appreciably more costly than the others. In Boufflers' *Aline* she found a description of just the group of cottages she wanted. A dozen buildings with thatched roofs, leaded-glass windows, outside staircases and balconies, were made to look as old as possible, but neat as well as picturesque. The dairy stood at the edge of the little lake into which the stream from Marly flowed and which was used as a refrigerator. Sometimes the Queen milked her favorite cows, Brunette and Blanchette, but not habitually. As milkmaid or shepherdess she was more often seen upon her private stage than in her

village where twelve poor families found in the neighborhood of Versailles, were glad to run the farm. They were made comfortable and happy; but they served as instances of the luxurious, fanciful display of a foreign princess. Her enemies laughed at the billiard-room and other innovations in one of the cottages, and wondered how the peasants liked this game. It was of course provided for the Queen's friends; but that made it no less absurd. They could enjoy that sport in the palace.

She brought her children to the Petit-Trianon as often as her friends, for it was good for them; but the gossips thought of all the prices paid for little herds of goats, for extra playgrounds, gardens; for regiments of nurses and attendants quartered nearby in the Grand-Trianon. And her enemies continued to complain that she neglected ceremonious duties at Versailles. But, as usual, the King approved. He loved this chance for peace and solitude and family life, and he was tolerant of his wife who arranged everything to please her friends.

A fête transformed the park into a fair with booths for the court ladies and one for the Queen who sold lemonade. Outside these grounds, along the road, were temporary shops for Paris merchants. In the Trianon garden was an open-air theatre, as at any fair; and further on, the band of the French guards played in Chinese costumes. Supper was served under the trees at night by Venetian lantern light. The Queen walked among her seated guests, neglecting her own supper to act her part of hostess as she pleased. Here one evening sneaking stealthily in incomplete disguise of long black cloak that failed to hide a cardinal red beneath, came a persistent, fatal figure, uninvited, repulsive to Marie Antoinette whose steps he dogged, and to whom she steadily declined to speak.

On summer Sundays there were rustic balls under a tent or in the village barn, where she danced a quadrille and wandered

in her crowd of guests. "All who are well dressed" were welcome at this time, excepting special persons whom the Queen might designate. Suave royal greetings in the Trianon manner were bestowed on children and their nurses; and gossip said this open hospitality was unexampled in the history of monarchy; that these Sunday mobs were most objectionable; and that at other times the Queen excluded too many persons, admitting only royal relatives and a little, arbitrary group of chosen friends; that all was done *de par la Reine* whereas in all the realm the only proper orders were the King's; that an upward sliding scale of entertainment would involve more servants, larger kitchens, and continually increased expense. Yet elaborate suppers such as Marie Antoinette served were quite the usual thing in all the great French houses, and it was ridiculous to be shocked at a Trianon menu offering a choice of eight soups, eight dishes of eggs, sixteen casseroles, forty-eight entrées, sixteen kinds of roast, sixteen principal, forty-eight minor entremets; or, at the summing up, counting servants and all, a total of more than twelve hundred people to be fed.

In the evenings there were wasteful burnings of bundles of twigs behind the Temple of Love to make it stand out as the brightest spot in the gardens, while the smoke twined wreaths among the branches overhead, and the leaves reflected the flickering light below. Great fans with hanging lanterns were stationed here and there; transparent plates with painted flowers bloomed in artificial radiance; there were the sounds of violins and laughter, while brightly colored figures with white powdered hair moved through the shadows and the shafts of light.

During the first years of her reign Marie Antoinette spent no night at the Petit-Trianon; she simply went there for a part of the day, watching the progress of the many improvements, amusing herself in the gardens, or reading the latest

novels in the Château, for here she had her library, all but a few books in the great palace. She came with one or more of her ladies, usually with Mme Elizabeth whom, as has been seen, she learned to know and love, and who preferred to stay here, as she said, at the foot of her brother's throne rather than to sit upon another one that might be hers by marriage.

The Queen one year had an attack of measles during which she could not see the King except in the garden from her balcony. Permission had been granted certain persons to run the risk of infection in order to amuse the invalid. Mme de Polignac was confined elsewhere with the same sickness; therefore Madame and the princesse de Lamballe and Mme Elizabeth were in attendance. But entertainment called for gayer company, and to the Queen's room at the Petit-Trianon from seven in the morning till eleven at night when they retired to their quarters at the Grand-Trianon, four male members of the coterie were admitted. At fifty the baron de Besenval was still addicted to intrigue disguised as flirtation. He was not particularly witty, but well provided with risqué stories and full of new suggestions for the discomfiture of etiquette. The duc de Guines, no less ambitious but more subtle and therefore more dangerous than Besenval, was still unworthy of such efforts as were made in his behalf by Marie Antoinette in Turgot's time. The comte d'Esterhazy, a good soldier, was in favor with the King who paid his gambling debts. He was young, attractive, steadier than Guines and Besenval, devoted to the monarchy like the fourth and best of these gentlemen, the duc de Coigny whose perfect manners the three others lacked. Versailles began at once to wonder what four ladies, if the King were ill, would have the entrée to his room. Meanwhile Louis XVI retained his health and Marie Antoinette her courtiers. While they supped or dined she listened to the agitations of Vermond and Mercy, and when these two retired and those four returned, she laughed in compensation

for the serious interval. Hands were raised in horror at the courtiers' proposal to spend the nights at the royal bedside chaperoned by the ladies aforementioned: a joke, of course, and never put in practice, yet no less unseemly than the songs this quartet sang by day, the ridicule it heaped upon the head of absent Louis, the things it urged the Queen to make him do. She laughed heartily, forgot quickly, and soothed the little jealousies which for a moment almost made her four friends serious. Coigny thought Guines too much in favor, just as, at another time, the Polignac had envied Coigny. All this made Marie Antoinette seem very popular, yet sometimes she wondered if she ever would have peace. One other man was with her for a while at Trianon, the excellent duc de Liancourt whose advice she neglected while she listened to the others. The time passed rapidly, the convalescent steadily improved. Rowboats carried Queen and company across the Grand Canal where a picnic lunch was served. Afternoons were spent in walking, talking, the usual heavy gambling ending in early suppers; and Marie Antoinette was sent to bed at the fixed hour of eleven.

Quite well again, she went to Trianon almost every day that summer with relatives and special friends.

This special friendship that caused so much talk was not her own invention. She was again the follower, not the leader of a fashion. It was the accepted thing for friendships between women to be sentimental, to approach the point often ridiculed in stories of ten letters a day from this dear friend to that. Naturally sentimental, Marie Antoinette adopted a sentimental fashion easily. Her effusive flowery friendships often called for tearful embraces; and one day the comte d'Artois chanced to find the Queen in the arms of Mme de Polignac who had confessed her weariness of courts, her wish to leave this one — chiefly because the Queen had remonstrated with her for encouraging the maréchal de Ségur in thinking he

might be minister of war. Artois, meanwhile, had closed the door, had heard nothing they were saying; and he told his friends he had discovered a secret relationship. More than an hundred years later someone who had read the still unpublished letters of Marie Antoinette to Mme de Polignac said that on his honor as a royalist he was sure that gossip at its worst was right about these friends. Yet intense emotional expression was the general epistolary manner of the day, and an intense emotional expression may often be distorted in the minds of those inclined to credit special implications. If there had been something to conceal, would even a notorious indiscretion have committed it to writing? And, if so, would not the recipient of such letters have destroyed them for her own sake if not for that of royal reputation?

Whatever Mme de Polignac may have been, neither she nor the princesse de Lamballe was witty or keen of mind; in fact, the unlovely comtesse Diane de Polignac and the duchesse d'Andlau were specially distinguished for these qualities as members of this set. It seems that Marie Antoinette preferred pretty faces like that of the duchesse de Guiche, daughter of Polignac, to minds more sparkling. She preferred witty men to witty women, but her closest friends of either sex were not conspicuously brilliant.

The case of the marquise de Coigny is specially significant in comparison with the members of the Polignac group. This lady thought that to form a circle of her own would be more interesting than to remain within this favored one. When she had settled in the capital, Marie Antoinette said: "Mme de Coigny is the Queen of Paris, and I am merely the Queen of Versailles." Yet she did not carry this idea beyond a passing thought. She did not notice that it would be impossible to imagine in Mme de Coigny such childishness as resulted in a contest between herself and Mme de Polignac over a billiard cue. The Queen won. But Mme de Coigny, by subtler

methods, captured the prince de Ligne who thought himself the friend of Marie Antoinette, of whom he had written to the lady in Paris: "The charm of her face, as lovely as her soul, the pleasure of her society kept me for five months in almost unbroken attendance. The delights of Versailles enchanted me, and gratitude brought me back" — merely gratitude ? The Queen had never, he decided, cared for him so deeply as, for a moment, he cared for her. She had told someone that she sensed in him a fickleness, yet she loved to flirt with him. Once when she told him he must leave Versailles and then return, the mere thought of passing fifteen days without her brought to his eyes tears that she did not see, for she was laughing at his protestations. Unrequited love, he found, did not outlast a fortnight, for he came back quite whole of heart, but never lost affection for her. One blemish he did note in Marie Antoinette: that she was boring when she insisted on relating all that she had experienced at a masked ball — what she had said, what had been said to her, this sly remark and that, this funny situation and that other. The prince would have preferred to tell his own adventures rather than hear of all these trivialities, these mild indiscretions which meant so much to her. He told of having enjoyed teasing her, of finding her attractively good-natured when embarrassed as she was sometimes in giving proper greetings to distinguished visitors at court, though she always regained self-possession in a moment. Sometimes she lacked tact, as in meeting the author of a libretto and the composer of the score, one day, she carelessly addressed words of praise to only one. On these and other trifles he rallied her, and one day made her cry in a room full of people, an injury she at once forgave.

In his letters to Mme de Coigny he struck a far deeper note of admiration: "Do you know, Madame la marquise, that I miss you ? You are not like other women, nor am I like other men who care for you, for I appreciate you as they do

not. You are good, though some do not believe it; you have a charming simplicity; you are always naturally and easily witty; you do not need to search for epigrams — they come to you of their own accord. In future you will be a kindlier maréchale de Luxembourg; you will have the keenness of a Mme du Deffand, the understanding of a Mme Geoffrin, the taste of a maréchale de Mirepoix . . . you are the most charming of women, and there is no one whom I miss as I miss you."

The Queen was, to the prince, a charming child. She was not like the great ladies of the capital. Their energy was tireless, their wit still moved their dying lips, their manners were perfection, their taste impeccable. But they had not a certain joyousness, a love of life, a spontaneity. They were unconquerably energetic, but they were tired. They loved to talk of life, but some of them loved the conversation more than its subject. Their hearts were not cold, but their minds were warmer. They were the last of an ancient race, and, by contrast with them, Marie Antoinette, descendant of a line of kings far longer than their lines of noblemen, gave evidence of a blood less blue and much more red. In her enthusiasms and her love of freedom she might have been mistaken for one of the hot partisans of a new world, rather than for one of Versailles' queens. It was a part of her tragedy to have failed to be exclusively or adequately either, and yet to have been most unhappily both.

There was perhaps an instinct more than mere caprice in Marie Antoinette's much criticized choice of friends, although she did not see the situation clearly. Certain discriminating persons wearied of her and would have shown this feeling had she not been Queen. Those that remained permanently, unselfishly, genuinely loyal were little Lamballe, kind Elizabeth, and, above all, Fersen, too much in love to be a keen observer. As for her profiteering friends they seemed de-

COLUMBIA, MO.

MODERN COPY OF AN ANONYMOUS PORTRAIT
OF THE FRENCH SCHOOL, PAINTED IN 1771

voted at the time. She had but one choice: frivolous temporary friendship, or formal courtly deference intrinsically cold. She could not hesitate, for she would have life as long as she could raise a finger. Life, as she felt and understood it, she did for a moment gain; and in sad years that followed she looked back and longed for just that, and not for things that were not hers to have, and which she could not understand. She was not without instinctive knowledge of herself. It was, rather, that by an occasional serious effort — and by one particularly — she aided chance and circumstance in their pursuit of her. For she could not realize that though she was severely censured for her play, she might have found her safety in that play alone, if she had learned to play a bit more skilfully.

She knew that many queens who had died natural deaths and worn their undisputed crowns throughout their lives, had neither known nor cared to know anything about affairs of state. But if the reigns of insignificant women are marked by civil wars or revolutions which failed to destroy thrones, the reason is that a helpless sovereign can at times find men to solve the problem. The one alternative, except disaster, is a monarch who knows how to rule. Marie Antoinette was living in a time of peace in which she saw no desperate sign of brevity. She was no judge of men, she had no skill to rule in little things or big. She knew that queens may love flattery, bargain for it, get it, but the price they pay is the measure of their success. Elizabeth of England never forgot the game she played: she was no dupe of any flatterer. If she caused scandal she knew how to put it down, for even the most temerous courtier or adversary respects a queen who knows her business ever and always above all to rule. He also knows the queen who cares far more for play than power, and he profits by that preference. Catherine of Russia's lovers cost Russia many millions; Marie Antoinette's alleged lovers cost France

nothing, but her mere acquaintances involved a financially embarrassed nation in considerable expense. Elizabeth knew her England, Catherine her Russia: this was their strength, for they could make their subjects love, forgive, obey. Marie Antoinette's subjects believed and held against her an increasing number of disparaging reports, and they knew she could not make them love, forgive, obey.

In her flirtations she followed a definite line of error. It was fashionable to flirt, her friends flirted, she had for some time flirted at masked balls. At Versailles it was fashionable for flirtations to hide or to become affairs which a queen may not have unless she possesses considerable skill. Marie Antoinette wanted the reputation of the flirt who will not run the risks she seems to think of running. Yet this apparent possibility gave rise to wide suspicion, and men tried to see how far she actually would go, boasting the while of conquests still unmade. Pride of conquest was half the fascination of such affairs, and to wound this pride was to turn a conceited upstart into an enemy who would stop at nothing between him and revenge.

The duc de Lauzun was always a spoilt child. At twelve he knew himself destined to power of money and position without, as he admitted, the slightest need of any merit in himself. He had often had the mistresses he wanted. His favor with Mmes Dillon and Guémenée assured him that of Marie Antoinette who introduced him to the princesse de Lamballe telling her to love him as a brother. He was annoyed to find her majesty would not pay his debts, but this he did not mention, for it was to her credit to have refused. He had silly schemes of one sort and another which she would not countenance, thereby irritating him the more. He fell into Polignac disfavor by bragging of an influence he had not, but of which he had made a possibility appear credible. Then, one day, granted an audience by the Queen, Lauzun pretended

she had encouraged him. Marie Antoinette pointed to the door: "Sortez, Monsieur"; and when he had beaten a surprised retreat and someone else had entered the Queen's presence: "Never," she said, "shall that man be admitted here again." Lauzun wrote memoirs, and this was his story: that she showed him such marked attention he felt bound to warn her against the inevitable criticism of the court; but she implored him not to leave her, and finally, in great emotion, sank into his arms as if she meant to give herself to him. Many believed him, saw no incongruous nonsense in his refusal of her favors, thinking it quite like her to have offered them to him, to many others. For further vengeance, Lauzun, who fell in love with Mme de Coigny, agreed with her that Marie Antoinette was unjust and dishonest; for Mme de Coigny was related to the Cardinal de Rohan.

The same sort of attack occurs in the memoirs of that other fatuous courtier the baron de Besenval who, enraged at the disgrace of his ambitions, described his presence in such secret chambers with the Queen as could impenetrably hide her conduct. Nothing could have been more natural than that these men should write such memoirs and that Marie Antoinette should have been thus described.

These elaborate underminings of her reputation were more than adverse criticism needed for success. When she danced with someone, particularly a foreigner, there were always those who saw it as a proof of guilt. She had not yet reached the point of taking serious notice of the scandal that pursued her. She scorned it as she felt it should be scorned and she still flirted with various beneficiaries of Polignac, notably with "handsome Dillon" whose face was all he needed for his fortune. There were certain men she merely tolerated, especially the comte de Vaudreuil whose mistress was Mme de Polignac. His manners were perfect when he cared to make them so, and he was a clever actor and musician, useful on the

stage of Trianon. The comte d'Adhémar was the wittiest of the group. The Queen objected to his ambitions, but she was persuaded to consent to his appointment as ambassador to England, against her better judgment.

Among her friends and acquaintances there was one man whom she loved. She did not see him after the old King died, till four years later when at once she greeted him cordially, favored him increasingly, walked with him at Trianon, induced him to attend the soirées of Polignac and Lamballe, and her own private concerts for her friends for whom she one day sang, fixing her eyes on him:

Ah! que je fus bien inspirée
Quand je vous reçus dans ma cour

— and it was whispered that the word *cour* sounded as if it were *cœur*. "Fersen," wrote Creutz to Gustave III, "has been so well received that courtiers have been critical, and I cannot deny having seen clear signs of the Queen's high regard. But his modesty and his reserve have been admirable, particularly his resolution to go presently to America, though it is obviously almost impossible for him to tear himself away." The Queen's eyes were turned toward him constantly during the last days of his visit. The duchesse de Fitz-James said to him: "So you are abandoning your conquest, eh ?" "If I had made one," replied Fersen courteously, "I should not abandon it. Unfortunately I go free, for no one will regret my absence."

Returning several years later, his distinguished services to France and America were rewarded by an offer of a French regiment, and he wrote his sister: "Try to persuade my father to consent to this appointment which would make me the happiest of men, its forfeiture the most unhappy." Then, when he became colonel of the Régiment-Royal-Suédois: "I can

scarcely believe that this joy has come to me." His appearance had changed in the last five years. He looked older; but his suffering in the absence of the Queen had made his face more interesting. Her love for him had deepened, she believed in his devotion, and she trusted no one else. "I see my friend in strictest privacy," he wrote. "Her kindness affords me what it can of consolation for the thought that calumny persistently attacks her. She is an angel of courage, goodness, delicacy; and there has never been a love like ours." It was the happiest period of their lives. "Here, my sister, are strands of her hair which she sends you. She is really touched by your wish to have them, and I cannot die content until you two have met. She is so good, so perfect; and by loving you she makes me love her still more tenderly than before. . . I have decided never to marry, because I cannot marry her."

What was the nature of their relationship ? If she had been his mistress would not Mercy have found out and told the Empress ? But Marie Thérèse died three years before the time when her daughter spent her happiest days at Versailles. Then would not Mercy, still at court, have informed the Emperor, the Empress' successor, to whom he regularly wrote ? Marie Antoinette of course knew well enough that queens who have had love affairs have not always lost their crowns. She knew that there was nothing at Versailles more marked than easy consolation for matrimonial infelicity. Her enemies would naturally be happy to expose her, but she could hope to keep one secret from them. There was a labyrinth of secret rooms and corridors in the palace of Versailles, and these had served the predecessors of the present King. They were empty now, accessible to her. Louis was often at a distance in council with his ministers, or following the hunt. At night he frequently retired alone, his wife incognita at opera balls in Paris, sometimes returning to another room. She was not in love with Louis, she was in love with Fersen,

she was headstrong, ardent, defiant of restraint. She humbled the conceit of Lauzun and of Besenval. But she may have given encouragement to Fersen whom she loved, who made no demands, who asked no favors. Yet her unconventionality was in all observable respects a superficial giddiness, whereas a rigid, technical faithfulness, or a sense of honor based on character, tradition, innate loyalty, and cordial pride, were as typical of her as love of gaiety and obedience to impulse. It has been reported by Cabanès that Pierre de Nolhac once made a remark he neither published nor confirmed in writing, that he had seen proof of Marie Antoinette's unique disloyalty to the King. There is however no proof in her available letters nor in those of Fersen who edited their correspondence. It is an open question. But it is certain that if Marie Antoinette was Fersen's mistress, it was the least important error that she ever made.

The Queen loved music and the theatre. She knew almost nothing of the other arts, nor cared especially to know. In Vienna she had played with Mozart, studied a little with Gluck; and at Versailles her music lessons had been a pastime, her concerts a pleasant way of entertaining friends. Mme du Deffand said it was the fashion to listen to music with transports amounting to convulsions; but Queen and Polignac were not given to these hysterical ecstasies. To please the Dauphine Gluck was induced to come to Paris with his operas; and when *Iphigenia in Aulis* was performed before the death of Louis XV, his granddaughter applauded loudly, and continued a somewhat lonely acclaim of *Alcestis,* doing what she could, as Queen, to prevent Gluck's suffering at the hands of those who set Piccini up as rival to the greater man. Yet, not wishing to be unfair, she did not work against Piccini; she loved Italian music though she recognized the higher merit of the German. She loved French music though she felt its inferiority to both; and she thought the struggle between Gluck-

ists and Piccinists might act as stimulus to the composers of her realm, give rise to something more important than the charming airs of Grétry and of other skilful makers of pretty songs. She consented to be Grétry's daughter's godmother, often received her at Versailles, often delighted audiences in theatres by throwing her a kiss. Try as she did, however, to be gracious to composers of several nations, she was accused of neglecting those of France. Piccinists, Gluckists, were not the only rival cliques. There were the partisans of Sacchine and those of the French composer Lemoyne, a group that hated all the others and the Queen as well though she had had Lemoyne's *Phèdre* produced at Fontainebleau and favored other French productions. She had gone so far as to refuse to help Mozart when he came to Paris at the height of her reign, fearing that to patronize one more foreigner — not at that time called a greater man than any of the others — would be held too much against her. Yet she could not have been more severely criticized had she acted in his behalf, and her having failed to do so is a strange caprice. She thought, indeed, that loyalty to Gluck stood in her way; nevertheless, that loyalty seemed to her no obstacle to other favors such as have been noted. Mozart went away in deep discouragement, full of scorn for French music and French taste, his despair out of all proportion to the real significance of his defeat. The contrast between the little Austrian archduchess who picked him up and the Queen of France who let him fall, may have occurred to him. And it is strange that Mozart's music was not her favorite, for it is the perfect expression of the eighteenth century she loved. Gluck's melodies lack gaiety and brilliance. Marie Antoinette, however, was not alone in failing to detect Mozart's consummate and incomparable genius. But if she had heard the opera based on Beaumarchais' libretto, she might have understood. She was in prison before Paris heard *Les Noces de Figaro.*

Her theatre is far more famous than her other interests in the power of art to pass the time. Private theatres in her day were still more popular than English gardens or quaint villages: they were everywhere, and they were all the rage. A rich family would roll a toy theatre to the foot of the bed of a sick child where every day a comedy, tragedy, or opera would be performed. The lines were sung or spoken for the puppet actors by persons hidden where the child could hear them. Near the time of Mme Royale's birth, Marie Antoinette saw through the doorway of her bedroom a play performed upon an improvised stage. Comedy was the favorite entertainment for the young and for the old, whatever it might cost. The princesse de Guémenée retiring bankrupt to her country place established at once her private theatre.

There had always been little theatres on the great stage of Versailles. The Sun King danced for the court until he heard the lines in which Racine asserted that such activities do not become great monarchs. Before the Petit-Trianon theatre there was at the Grand-Trianon a temporary structure, moved thence to the nearby orangery where actors from the Comédie-Française performed in an elaborate setting. There was a panel of imitation jewels which delighted the eyes of the spectators, and horrified the minds of those who never saw them but had heard that they were real. No makeshift playhouse would suffice for Marie Antoinette who gave orders for a new auditorium in the grounds of the Petit-Trianon. All decorative details were in the Queen's good taste; and hers became the prettiest theatre that Versailles had seen. Marie Antoinette based her establishment upon the general plan of Mme de Pompadour, but on a smaller scale. The King's mistress provided five or six performances a month for six years during a November till April season. The Queen's productions were variable. One year there was a set of them in August and September; then, except for a few isolated presenta-

tions, there were but two other seasons, and, after a considerable interval, the single, final offering. Mme de Pompadour's theatre was an institution; Marie Antoinette's an amusement costing less than the marquise's and not so much as the duchesse du Maine's at Sceaux. Yet none of all the French private theatres gained such a reputation for extravagance as this one at the Petit-Trianon. No one thought of the above comparisons nor could get at the figures if they wished to know the facts. The Trianon expenses were thought of as a whole; gardens, village, and playhouse were combined in one conception of a foreign spendthrift. Marie Antoinette refused to be hampered by the stupid wardens of the treasury who, in all times, are misers talking penurious nonsense about lack of funds. Moreover, Louis XVI had agreed that Trianon and its component parts should be financed; therefore, again, she could reply to all objections: "The King approves."

The player Queen, remembering lessons at Vienna and her private little performances as Dauphine at Versailles, had long cherished her ambition for further ventures on the wider stage which now was hers. But only the King, the princes, and the princesses were to see her, much to the annoyance of excluded persons who, were they invited, would have caused criticism of a privacy less strict. The acting troupe was chosen from among the royal family and from the favorite set in which there happened to be more than ordinary histrionic talent. The King became enthusiastic; between the acts he went behind the scenes to congratulate his wife. The final curtain fell at nine, and then there was a supper served for audience and actors. Mercy, behind a screen, saw two operettas — *Rose et Colas* and *Le Devin du Village,* the cast including Artois, the duc and the duchesse de Guiche, the comte d'Adhémar, the duchesse de Polignac, and, in the rôle of Colette, Marie Antoinette. Mercy, like the King, thought her voice and acting excellent, but others disagreed. Some called

her as an actress "royally bad"; some admitted that in certain scenes she brought tears to eyes that seldom wept, and that her stage presence and her gestures often gave the effect of professional training. It seems that she was at her best in light opera, for she had neither the necessary finesse nor power of character-portrayal for high comedy. When someone told her she had met with adverse criticism, she replied: "I wish to be applauded or to be hissed according to my desserts"; and, by this answer, annoyed those who hoped their information would anger her.

The King was called in now and then to help the Queen pacify the jealousy of rival actors who demanded the leading rôle; sometimes as to whether Marie Antoinette or someone else should be the star. These disputes she generally found amusing, but she was irritated by the refusal of Madame to act in her company on the ground that such performances were beneath her rank.

Now ALL the French play-world, professional and amateur, is agog over Figaro, a character never seen on any stage, whom all France wants to see. The play is ready — why is it not produced at once ? Everything is done to put it forward, every theatre clamors for it, sure of audiences eager for admission. It is about to be announced when censorship steps in again, and the public rages. If one may not see the play, one shall at least hear it. There is a general rush for Beaumarchais who must read and read again his play; great ladies use intrigue and bribery to capture him for their *soirées*. This play, all companies agree, is most amusing, particularly these lines: "Because you, the count, are a great lord you imagine you have genius. What have you done to deserve your title and your fortune ? You've but troubled yourself to be born !" Every great lord, laughing, says: What a clever man is Beaumarchais ! This play must be produced ! How absurd of the

King to object! One night courtiers with their tickets gripped in their triumphant fists drive in their carriages to a theatre door and find it closed. Back to Versailles go cursing courtiers calling the King a nuisance while the people call him a tyrant. He has unintentionally but overwhelmingly advertised the play, aided by Beaumarchais' genius for publicity, whereas, if he had let it go its way, it might perhaps have been a less successful scandal. Now it has caused not only scandal but a great force of opposition and of anger which proclaims: The King's to blame! He is afraid! He knows this comedy attacks himself as well as the nobility which sees no danger in a witty dialogue. High church dignitaries have long and often laughed at pieces far from pious, and this one shocks them not at all. At Gennevilliers the comte de Vaudreuil has a theatre where he manages to give two hundred guests the pleasure of attendance at a private performance of *The Marriage of Figaro.* The audience is enchanted; it carries its enthusiasm to Versailles; its verdict spreads over an already eager France. Weary and wavering the King at last allows the Comédie-Française to set up Figaro upon its boards: Figaro whom Louis XVI hates and has immortalized, thinking he has damned his insolence by expurgation. But the Queen has said in jest: "Purge it as you please, you'll never purify it." So, at any rate, thinks Paris, or the King was fooled by cuts less deep than he had ordered, for Paris packs the playhouse night after night, rejoicing in applause which is an insult to Versailles, an insult to the noblemen who join the crowd and laugh at what they do not see to be themselves, or, if they see, they find no harm in it.

The angry King sends Beaumarchais away to jail, and thereby suffers an additional charge of tyranny. Then relenting, opens the prison door, and gives the astonished captive the privilege of attendance at a royal, private performance of his *Barber of Seville* at Trianon, without gaining the least

credit for his clemency. The doors of her palace and her theatre are still, for a little while, the Queen's to open or to close, and therefore she has had her part in this decision. She had been torn between a feeling that the King had rightly frowned upon the other play (which is however no less disrespectful than the *Barber,* for Figaro is the essence of both pieces) and a wish to move in harmony with her special friends who favored Beaumarchais. She could not go with them to Gennevilliers without the King's consent, but now, with his approval, they come at her request to Trianon. The curtain rises and the play begins. Rosine appears upon the stage, a pretty girl who says she is discreet, whose talk is clever, and who sings coquettishly. She weeps, defies, reproaches, pardons, and evades a miserly old guardian who has stood between her and the man she loves. Courtiers that constitute the audience have clapped their hands politely for this actress heretofore. But their applause is louder, longer now. This is her first performance as Rosine, and her success would not have been more marked had her small public never known the player as the Queen. The play is over and the curtain falls. It is the last of all the comedies at Trianon, the last of all the comedies this player Queen will play. Another stage is being set where she will be commanded to appear. Has she been trained for this new rôle ? Can she have learned in frivolous court and school of comedy to be a great tragedienne ? She will not have much time in which to memorize her lines. The comte d'Artois, just now, upon the stage of Trianon asked: "Who knows whether the world will last six weeks ?" And yet he laughed — his part, in fact, required it — at that description of the whirlwind which is bred in whisperings. He had no need to mimic the assurance with which he spoke the line that followed: "One must have high rank and a great name to shake the world by means of calumny."

Yet there have been great triumphs for Beaumarchais: The

King has fought against him quite in vain. And at Versailles, four days before this little comedy at Trianon, Mme de La Motte brought down the name of Rohan to disgrace, and to a more profound debasement the reputation of the Queen of France.

CHAPTER V

CALUMNY

Un bruit leger, pianissimo, *murmure et file, et seme en courant le trait empoisonné. Telle bouche le recueille, et* piano, piano, *vous le glisse en l'oreille étroitement. Le mal est fait, il germe, il rampe, il chemine, et* rinforzando, *de bouche en bouche, il va le diable. Puis, tout-à-coup, ne sait comment, vous voyez calomnie se dresser, siffler, s'enfler, grandir à vue d'œil. Elle s'élance, étend son vol, tourbillonne, enveloppe, arrache, entraîne, éclate et sonne, et devient un cri général, un* crescendo *public, un chorus* universel *de haine et de proscription. Qui diable y résisterait?*

— BEAUMARCHAIS

The greatest scandal waits on greatest state.

— SHAKESPEARE

THIS adventuress La Motte emerging from obscurity, and certain courtiers, erstwhile friends, half the royal family, scandal-mongers near and far were gathering, closing in, offering greater and greater services to calumny in aid of one persistent purpose; to make it plain to all that the Queen's frivolity had become the thin disguise of treachery to the old departing France, treachery to the new, rising nation. Calumny was master of strategy, calumny would not altogether fail; but supreme success depended upon two points. Would the Queen herself unconsciously continue to co-operate; unconsciously provide a word of truth for this distorted and distended tale as for the earlier and lighter gossip ?

Meanwhile, to give Versailles a few more months of gaiety before the lights were all put out, frivolity still held its court. From time to time something was said or done about economy, but it was a drop taken from the bucket into which other drops

still fell. In the palace Marie Antoinette was still amused by jokes called shocking, still rocked with laughter at someone's description of somebody at court, still wasted her time, still neglected entirely to notice the rising waters in the river of France that flowed around Versailles. The King was often indiscreet. Under the influence of much good food and a moderate amount of wine, he laughed, talked in his natural crude way which many people called a sign of drunkenness. The prosperity of the favorite was at its height. The Queen transported the court for nine days to La Muette, near Passy where Mme de Polignac approached her confinement and where her majesty spent many days, returning to La Muette for supper. The King had never called on anyone of less than royal blood, and his presence at the house in Passy scandalized Paris almost as much as a Polignac daughter's dowry, the largest ever given by the King to anyone except a relative. Calumny profited by the sensational bankruptcy of the prince de Guémenée whose wife had long been known as a special friend of Marie Antoinette; and therefore this disaster was attributed to the extravagance the Queen encouraged. To help her friend Marie Antoinette could do no more than persuade Louis to grant a moratorium. This ruined the most desperate creditors, those of the lowest class, and thereby angered the people without saving the Guémenées, whose powerful Rohan relatives turned against the Queen. The Guémenées left court. The public bitterly disapproved of the new governess of the Children of France, the favorite who was still more hated in her new capacity than she had been before.

The position of Governess of the Children of France had now for some time been no longer one of name and salary alone. The second child of Louis and of Marie Antoinette was born a year ago, when, for the first time at Versailles, a mob had been excluded from the scene in favor of the welfare of the Queen. She had not been allowed to see the baby

nor to know its sex until the doctor had announced the satisfactory condition of his patient. Then the King, happier than he had ever been, approached her door: "Monsieur le Dauphin requests permission to come in." Even the court could catch the spirit of rejoicing that spread through France. Even Monsieur and Madame manifested cheer, and Versailles wept and laughed for joy. From Paris came an hundred women of the markets dressed in silk, some wearing diamonds. Three of them were admitted to the Queen's bedroom, their greetings graciously received. The King's aunts were at their old tricks when a deputation of grave-diggers came to offer their felicitations. Mme Adelaide called them insolent, wished to drive them away, fearing, as formerly, her niece's popularity.

Though there were scattered murmurings at the privacy of the Dauphin's birth, Paris wholeheartedly celebrated the event. Loudly acclaimed as she came in state to Notre Dame, partway in gilded coach, partway on foot, Marie Antoinette knelt and prayed in the cathedral; thence to Sainte-Geneviève, thence by long detour through crowded, cheer-resounding streets she reached the Hôtel de Ville where the King joined her with his brothers, without the Orléans, Condé, Conti princes who resented having had no special invitation. Dinner and gambling in municipal halls preceded the illuminations for which happy throngs gathered below the balcony where sat the King and Queen. They drove through the city's lighted streets, stopping a moment at the house where La Fayette, recently returned from America, might greet the Queen. They moved across the sea of light that lay on the Place Louis XV; thence to Versailles where celebrations filled succeeding days and where one night magnificently dressed and with supreme success the Queen danced to applause. She danced with an old general, with a young courtier, with whom she would, and no one whispered anything but praise. She could forget that there had been more cries of *"Vive*

COLUMBIA, MO.

MARBLE PORTRAIT BUST

By Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne

le Roi!" than *"Vive la Reine!"* in all these days of national festivity; forget that she had seen a warning of intended violence nailed to the door of Notre Dame; forget that it was the son and not the mother who had made the nation's holiday.

For a few short seasons at Versailles with her children whom France seemed to love, a kindly circle closed around her; and the French language spoken by her children, was to her the loveliest of all sounds. She planned their lives, arranged entertainments for them, brought a group of little players from Bel-Œil to pronounce upon a miniature stage set up in Mme de Polignac's room, the formal lines of *Iphigenia* to the delight of King and Queen who waited on their guests. At supper the King took his place behind the chair of an Orestes aged fourteen; the Queen behind an Iphigenia of eleven.

Marie Antoinette's hatred of etiquette did not prevent Mme Royale, her daughter, from adhering rigidly to its laws and by-laws. On one occasion this child of seven thus received a compliment: "Mme d'Oberkirch, I am delighted that you find me charming, but astonished that you should say so." At the age of five the Dauphin was presented with a richly decorated carriage set, some say, with jewels. When someone remarked upon its cost, the Queen replied, laughing: "At the time of my son's birth the King increased my allowance with no idea that I should hoard the money." One day the old servant Josèphe, thinking his young master too extravagant, said: "Monseigneur, one must ask God for wisdom rather than for riches." "My dear Josèphe," retorted the Dauphin, "I shall ask for both."

Impressions derived from the Queen herself that she would prefer to have no more children — it being fashionable to stop at one or two — caused Mercy and Joseph II to criticize her selfishness. Later, when her second son and daughter were born, they made the opposite complaint that she was far more

interested in her children than in the affairs of Austria. She was aggravated by their interruptions, dragged time and again from nursery and amusement to listen to new chapters in the endless tale of Europe's quarrels.

Of all the foreign relations of France during this reign, none was less baneful in its effect on Marie Antoinette than the American War of Independence which brought France glory, but in which her name did not conspicuously appear, whereas, at this time, other European complications stamped her as France's enemy, making her subjects forget forever that last and momentary popularity won by the Dauphin's birth.

Through the agency of Franklin, America had become the fashion; and La Fayette had sailed against his relatives' and King's consent to help the cause of justice, as in his childhood he had dreamed of hunting down the dragon Gevaudon, and as, in later years, he was to fight a real and no less dreadful monster. Then, early in the year after La Fayette had gone, the company at the Queen's ball greeted the announcement that France had become the ally of America.

Meanwhile the death of the Elector of Bavaria had caused Austrian ambition to assert itself, and Joseph II had filched from the nearest inheritor a grant of Bavarian land which he hastened to occupy. Prussia registered a formidable objection. By treaty and by marriage, France was Austria's ally, but she agreed with Prussia that Austria must be curbed.

Marie Antoinette, of course, was harassed by her relatives, felt she must help them, yet she was aware of Joseph's cupidity; aware, too, of her husband's love of peace. Louis XVI had already undertaken war against England, led by Vergennes' hope that France might regain the prestige lost in Louis XV's reign, and, by that profit, count its price well paid. Marie Thérèse did not approve of her son's conduct, but since it had involved Austria in trouble, she begged France for help. Louis

said to Marie Antoinette: "The ambition of your relatives upsets everything. They began with Poland; now they are playing the same game in Bavaria." "But," replied his wife, incontinently, "you cannot deny you were informed and in agreement with them on this matter." "I can," he answered, with astonishing assurance, "deny this absolutely."

Some months later, Marie Antoinette was pregnant and her duty clear: she must not weary herself with affairs of state; but Austria still pursued her, while at Vienna the French ministers were called fools. The King, finding her one day in tears, said he was sorry he could not help Austria; and she wrote her mother: "I could not hide the pain he caused me. I told him that I was ashamed to tell my mother of the way he treated me, but then he merely said: 'You see I am so much in the wrong that I have nothing to say in my own defence.'" The Queen thought Maurepas was at the bottom of this obstinacy; she rushed to attack him with such violence that even Mercy advised her to be calm, to try conciliation or dissimulation; but, to Marie Antoinette such double-faced conduct was intolerable, such subtlety beneath her dignity, for, if she hated a person, she would say so, now as in the time of Du Barry. She would not listen to the fear of France: We shall be sacrificed to Austria by the Queen. She listened to the Polignacs who told her that Vergennes was selfishly, unpatriotically ambitious; she listened to her mother's groans and sobs: "The rupture of our alliance will kill me." The Empress ignored the reputation which obedience to her commands would make for Marie Antoinette, and of the physical welfare of her daughter for whose present pregnancy she had prayed so long. She could see but one thing: Austria in danger, needed the help of France. Meanwhile Louis XVI was held to firmness by conviction and still more by his ministers. He would not fight for Austria though Prussia had begun the war against his ally, and though Joseph II wrote reproachfully:

"Since you don't wish to aid us, we will bravely struggle on alone." His sister wept; then suddenly resigned herself to inactivity. Her confinement was approaching, she must think of nothing else, though the Empress whispered a vague official threat that Austria might be induced to form a friendly understanding with France's enemy, England. Prussian Goltz, ambassador to France, watched each detail of development, hoping to see Austria estranged from France, hoping that the Queen would lose all credit, power, and influence.

Next year La Fayette returned. France worshipped him, the ladies of the court adored him, the Queen smiled: "Give me news of our good Americans, our dear republicans." He persuaded her to send her portrait to General Washington, and she helped him to become a colonel in the French cavalry.

And now in the spring, without her knowledge and without her aid, Austrian ambition agreed to compromise, and, in May, at Teschen there was signed a treaty by which Joseph II renounced Bavarian pretentions; but for this neither he nor Austria would ever pardon France. During the period of her interference, Marie Antoinette, failing to send French armies to her brother's aid, had plead for a congress which should terminate hostilities between Austria and Prussia; but it was not her influence that prevailed. Goltz who watched, who knew, declared her power to have been as nothing in the whole affair. As to the alleged millions sent to Austria before the treaty, they were involved in the agreement between France and Austria in 1756, the alternative having been set down as men or money in such a case. But in this instance it was Vergennes who ruled, who firmly held the King. Yet France, with calumny's collaboration, saw in every sign of weakness, in every moment of the matter, the Queen and no one else. She it was who made the King her slave; she it was who ordered every measure; she it was who sent still more millions than those that Mme Campan, Abbé Georgel, and Soulavie claim

that Austria gained. Calumny rightly said that she rejoiced. She felt that France owed Austria that help according to accepted stipulations. But calumny ignored the fact of Vergennes' determining will, and it assumed that Marie Antoinette knew the treasury could not afford to pay. Calumny made of this story the very tale it wished to tell: that France's foreign queen had now performed one definite act of treachery to France.

In the spring of the following year, Marie Antoinette worried about the weather. French forces were embarking for America under the comte de Rochambeau's command, and in this company sailed Fersen. She feared he might be killed upon a battlefield if he survived the dangers of the sea. When she expressed her anxiety, some thought she had no interest in the colonies, in spite of her enthusiasm on the occasion of La Fayette's return. On the other hand, many in France were growing weary of the war, and so, for reasons of expense, were Necker, Maurepas, and the King. Peace, finally achieved with victory in two more years, came as relief to all; but Marie Antoinette was chiefly happy in the thought that Fersen would return. She had not seriously considered the fact that although England was regarded as the enemy of France, the cause of Louis XVI was more in harmony with that of George III than with the claims of states desiring independence. She did not know the principal significance of French participation in a democratic cause: that here in France devotion to American ideas had come, alas for monarchy, to stay.

Marie Thérèse had died. Her daughter did not analyse the result in terms of profit and of loss. The Empress was the strongest Austrian influence upon the Queen of France; but now her son, the restless Joseph, would exert still more unwisely the pernicious foreign claim. He had received this message from his sister: "Oh ! my brother, my friend, only you are now dear to me in a country I shall always cherish.

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Love me, and remember that we are your allies and your friends." Joseph would not forget, nor suffer the indifference of France. When he came a second time to see his sister, he seemed able to forgive her inability to help him when he coveted Bavaria. He wept when he said good-bye to her and seemed again inclined to foster affection which, before long, he would again attempt to turn into material advantage.

While he awaited his next opportunity, she brought against herself increased antagonism built upon new instances of her interference in the affairs of the ministers. The government of France was at odds with itself. Vergennes was working expensively for French glory in opposition to Necker's economical schemes for financial stability; and Maurepas, jealous of both, thought only of his own interests. Necker rejoiced in the fall of two ministers — Sartine and Montbarey — only to find that their successors — Castries and Ségur — were conservative supporters of the old disorder, and consequently, of no use to him. Now, in his turn, Necker, like Turgot, found that he must go. He had been clever, not great; Turgot had been great, not clever. The Queen had not been Necker's enemy, but she had been a useless friend. He had explained to her the necessity for economy and she had seemed to understand, had tried occasionally to help, but had succeeded only in annoying the nobility. When Necker threatened to resign, her majesty had wept, had begged him not to leave, but he had recognized the strength of all those adversaries which he had raised against himself by showing, in his report on the condition of the state finances, the arbitrariness and extravagance of royal favors. His departure gave France the chance to throw another stone at monarchy, and to accuse a spendthrift Queen of full responsibility for the discomfiture of a great servant of the nation. No one was able to draw up the balance sheet. Joly de Fleury and then Ormesson failed. Who next? The favorite said: Calonne. He had a surface brilliance, he was

gay and entertaining, a charming liar, clever, energetic. The ladies loved him, but the Queen did not. She said: "He shall not have the office"; whereupon Vaudreuil grew angry, Artois too. Even Vergennes supported this doubtful candidate. The King obeyed Vergennes more readily than ever for death had recently deprived him of old Maurepas, the only other man whom Louis trusted. Again the Queen was overshadowed by Vergennes, as at the time of the Bavarian affair; and before long she thought he must be right, for Calonne was optimistic — he promised prosperity, handed money freely out to all, and to himself, no doubt, for he like France was heavily in debt. The Queen of France, said calumny at once regarding her as the chief source of the new minister's good luck, was singing a gay song:

Calonne n'est pas ce que j'aime,
Mais c'est l'or qu'il n'épargne pas.
Quand je suis dans quelqu' embarras
Alors je m'adresse à lui-même,
Ma favorite fait de même
Et puis nous en rions, tout bas,
Tout bas, tout bas, tout bas.

The people learned the words and sang them bitterly, sure that she was laughing slyly at her own cleverness in getting money to hide the difficulties in which her underhanded and extravagant use of funds involved her. She heard this song that she was said to sing, but she could not spare the time to worry over it, for, in the midst of new Austrian troubles, was born her second son, the duc de Normandie. Scandal whispered illegitimacy; mocked the selected godmother, Queen Caroline of Naples, sister of Marie Antoinette, and, like her, disloyal to the nation over which she ruled. Marie Antoinette was thinking of her many failures: of the recent death of her

old friend Choiseul whom she had tried in vain in other years to help; of her brother whose problems increased her own; of the necessity which took her now to an unfriendly Paris to celebrate the birth of this second son whom the capital showed no sign of greeting as it did the first. She wanted to take the Dauphin with her — he might arouse enthusiasm — but etiquette forbade. She sadly thought of calumny, its version of Necker's fall, of Calonne's rise; its unshakeable conviction that she had twisted all the course of politics into channels unfavorable to France.

Tired, deeply wounded by the frowning populace, she decided, after leaving Notre Dame, not to make the customary stop at Sainte-Geneviève. Thereby she convinced Paris of her impiety for the irrevelant reason that this patron saint was dearer to the city than Notre Dame herself. Through cold silent streets this day in May the Queen moved slowly to the Tuileries in despair. She could not bear to face the official welcome in the palace; she shut herself in a small room with Mme Elizabeth, and slowly summoned courage to face the audience at the opera that afternoon. To her intense surprise the house applauded. Encouraged, and with sudden hope, she bowed and smiled repeatedly, free from the silence of the surrounding city. In the evening she supped with Artois at the Temple Palace where the lights were bright, the company gay. But through the window she saw the high black massive Tower, like the great sullen populace watching her as she looked out that day through the window of the royal coach. Back to Versailles with saddest memories, the applause at the opera seeming a sound of no significance that for an instant broke the silent chorus of the capital.

The children needed a better climate than Versailles; it was to be found at La Muette which was too small for court and family and attendants. But nearby stood the more capacious palace of Saint-Cloud, which Marie Antoinette resolved

to have. It belonged to Orléans who was in debt and demanded an outrageous price: far more than it would have cost to enlarge La Muette. Nevertheless the King who did not like Saint-Cloud bought it from Orléans for the Queen. She was indifferent to Rambouillet which, with an eye to hunting on a wider scale, Louis purchased for himself. Moreover he had lately given handsome pensions, paid his brothers' debts. The public knew a little, guessed more of this, but did not know that royalty had recently sold considerable property and was able to afford these new expenditures, granting, as monarchy believed, that the treasury was flourishing in Calonne's hands. As to Saint-Cloud, Calonne opposed the plan, seeing more profitable ways of spending all those millions, but the Queen defied him, the King supported her, and Calonne could not deny the availability of cash since he had said that he could furnish it for other things.

Paris came in great successive crowds to walk in Saint-Cloud park, enjoying gardens which the Queen, to draw those crowds, had made expensive. The people made their promenade more amusing by heaping coarse abuse upon their hostess. They saw that all was done *de par la Reine;* they knew that, with all her theatres, she had built another here, the cost of which they overestimated. They did not know Calonne had fooled her by saying: "France is rich" — they thought that she had fooled Calonne. They were sure that she did everything for her own pleasure; they would not have believed she had her children's health in mind. More people came to Saint-Cloud than to Trianon, for Saint-Cloud was at the gates of Paris. Armies of women do not march from Paris to Versailles for fun. The Queen had hoped that Paris might learn again, as when the reign began, to know and love her just beyond the Bois. But calumny had coached the capital: Here in your face she flaunts her power, her influence, her extravagance.

And now the last foreign affair that Marie Antoinette attempted to handle at Versailles. She wrote her brother: "The King is not inclined to talk; sometimes he does not even tell me of matters which he has no wish to hide from me. He answers when I ask him questions, but it is all I can do to squeeze a third of the information from him, and then I must try to discover the rest of it by pretending to the ministers that the King has already told me all. I confess that I know less concerning foreign affairs than any others. The King has become a victim of Austrophobia. Sometimes he shows annoyance, will not argue, will not let me persuade him that his ministers occasionally make mistakes. I am forced to let the public think my influence great, for otherwise it would be nothing." The fact, however, was that if she had said she had no influence, the public would be certain she had lied.

Joseph's ambition was plaguing Holland, with the result that Holland turned on Austria. Vergennes thought France could not afford to antagonize either Austria or Holland, and he decided upon neutrality, whereat most frantic Austrian calls for help besieged the Queen. She tried to temporize, being doubtful of the justice of her brother's claims. France, seeing that the Emperor was resolved to push them, wrote an ultimatum threatening intervention not on Austria's side if hostilities were carried further. This put the Queen in a dilemma, for the King had shown her the ultimatum before sending it, and she was thus possessed of a state secret which she had not the right to criticize, yet she felt it her duty to assist her brother in some way. She furiously attacked Vergennes, persuaded him to grant a few days' delay in sending the ultimatum, warning him that she would hold him responsible if the Franco-Austrian alliance were broken off. Vergennes offered to resign, but the King in terror, and the Queen suddenly reduced to tears, implored him to remain, and he consented. She

wrote her brother: "I could do no more than obtain delay in the departure of the odious message which you no doubt regard as a strange and insolent communication." Later she wrote that he indeed had reason to be annoyed at Vergennes' obstinacy and procrastination, and at the way "this country acts" in such affairs. Joseph II, seeing other roads to conquest, changed his tone abruptly to one of conciliation, and finally, months later, Vergennes thought out a plan: He saw that Holland could be helped without a technical disloyalty of France toward her ally Austria. Marie Antoinette hailed the news in these words to her brother: "The King has said he will not fail to be of some assistance in a financial way." The scheme was that, for a consideration, Holland should sign a peaceful agreement, reparation to be paid in part by France if Holland could not pay it all. This settled the main points: first, that Austria had made unfair demands of Holland which Holland need not grant; second, that Holland, however much provoked, owed Austria reparation for having had precipitate recourse to arms. After much haggling over prices, the Treaty was signed at Fontainebleau, through the mediation of France and Prussia; and much was hereby gained, for, in a short time, France and Holland signed a treaty to defend each other's territory.

Now note the perversity of the people's attitude in France. These treaties were triumphs for French diplomacy. France had not been forced to break with either Austria or Holland, and had kept the latter from making a threatened friendly alliance with England. Vergennes thought it worth the price. The rôle of mediator had raised the prestige of France in Europe, and the spending of French millions (not the convoys of cartloads that calumny conceived) had increased the strength of France.

Calumny saw no advantage won; it only saw the Queen's unscrupulous love of Austria against which the French gov-

ernment fought in vain, in this affair and in the preceding one which the Bavarian succession caused. Calumny once more, in the long history of foreign queens, of Blanche de Castille and others, saw the foreigner spending for foreigners the money of the nation over which she ruled.

Meanwhile Calonne had made the general financial situation seem secure. Paris, hating Calonne as creature of the Queen, did as it said she did — it trusted him. "Never, oh never will there be a revolution," Mably said, "for the nation's moral laxity has sapped essential energy." She knew she was not guilty of calumny's worst charges, but she overlooked her various follies, her excitability, her indiscretion in denouncing ministers and King. She had begun to write, as has been noted, too critically of the French attitude toward Austria, and she was to write, in future, much more freely in this vein. When she asked Boufflers' opinion of what was being said about her, he wrote a poem in which wise admonition and severe censure were so disguised in superficial compliment that she received the verses gladly, sang them to her friends; and when she sailed down the river to Fontainebleau in a yacht borrowed from Orléans, the simple country folk greeted her with pleasure at the landing-place, and she exaggerated the significance of their applause. Even now, with every reason for considering the malevolent progress of public feeling toward her from that moment of the Dauphin's birth down to this termination of another Austrian quarrel, she still persisted in hope, or in the thought that her crown would ultimately be the talisman to frighten or to conquer any opposition.

But calumny had said that she gave French money to the enemies of France, and calumny was watching for new examples of her treachery. Yet in its wildest flight of fancy it could not imagine its approaching triumph. No one had dreamed that even Marie Antoinette's notorious indiscretion

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ANONYMOUS PASTEL PORTRAIT

German school

could entirely destroy her reputation; still less that a woman to whom the Queen had never spoken — Mme de La Motte — could pose as such a friend of Marie Antoinette as to so entirely fool even the credulous Cardinal de Rohan; could make him think the Queen had chosen (for the purpose of obtaining a diamond necklace which the King had offered her) to be the mistress of that cardinal whom she had consistently disdained to recognize by word or look or gesture.

THE STAGE that is Versailles is at this moment set for a ceremonious spectacle, a temporal pageant sanctioned by church and state. It is Assumption Day, more solemn in its splendor than any other in the calendar. It is, moreover, the day of the Queen's fête. In the great halls outside the King's closed rooms has gathered the brilliant company of the court with fashionable reinforcements from the capital awaiting the opening of the doors, the appearance of their majesties, to move in grandeur to the chapel where the Cardinal Prince Louis de Rohan, Grand Almoner of France, will officiate in Roman pomp. The procession, always prompt, is overdue; the hour of noon has struck. White powdered heads are moving, whispering: What is this delay ? Behind closed doors the King and Queen, the baron de Breteuil and Miromesnil, keeper of the seals, have for two hours been in council. Breteuil has read aloud a memoir of the court jeweller. It asserts that the Cardinal de Rohan has been given the authority, signed by the Queen's hand, to buy for her the most expensive necklace in France. Over this memoir at Trianon the other day their majesties arrived at a supreme decision: the cardinal must be openly condemned before the nation.

The King and Queen have known him to be dissipated, extravagant, heavily in debt. He must have wished to profit at the expense of the Queen's reputation; he cannot have been persuaded that the Queen of France would vilify her name.

Miromesnil, friend of Rohan, advises caution; Breteuil, the churchman's enemy, urges drastic measures such as suit the Queen who says: "He has used my name like a base and clumsy counterfeiter." The King inclines to hear what the accused may have to say. He is in the outer room of the council chambers with those others who have the *grande entrée*. A servant summons him, he hides the nervousness this honor causes. "My cousin," says the King, kindly, "what is this acquisition of a diamond necklace which it appears you purchased in the Queen's name ?" The prince turns pale. "Sire, I see that I have been deceived; but it was my purpose to deceive no one." "If that is the case," the King replies, still kindly, "you need have no fear. Explain yourself." The cardinal has often seen the Queen's proud head held high, but never quite so high as she now holds it. He has seen displeasure in her face, but he has never seen this threatening anger, hatred, scorn which blasts him with the knowledge that it could not have been she who met him that dark night among the trees. He calls himself a miserable fool, he trembles, and turns red. The King, still kindly, not knowing what a history is changing color in the cardinal's mind to match his face, says: "Write down what you have to tell me."

King and Queen and ministers move into a further room; the cardinal is left in agonizing disillusionment, never complete till now, his tongue and pen both paralyzed.

At last, with fifteen lines the most inadequate, he takes a paper to that further door and knocks. The King reads those lines and learns that behind a woman, Mme de La Motte, a Cardinal Prince may hide. "Where is she ?" asks the King, less kindly than before. "Sire, I do not know." "Have you the necklace ?" "Sire, that woman has it." The King, perplexed, orders Rohan back to the empty room. There is a moment of intense talk which the prince cannot hear. Now enter proudly where he is, these three and the imposing Queen.

The King commands Breteuil to read the jeweller's memoirs to the cardinal. "Where," sternly asks the King," are the alleged letters of authorization written and signed by the Queen ?" "Sire, I know now that they are false." "Indeed." "I will bring them to your majesty." "And that letter written by you to the jeweller ?" "Sire, I do not remember having written it, but the jeweller must be right. I will pay for the necklace." He pulls from his pocket a paper with the signature: *Marie Antoinette de France.* The King examines it, then says in anger: "But this is neither the autograph nor the handwriting of the Queen ! Is it possible for a prince of the house of Rohan, a Grand Almoner of France, to believe that she would sign herself *de France ?* Everyone knows that a queen signs her baptismal name. I must keep you under guard. Her name is precious to me, and it has been compromised. I must neglect no detail of this matter." Then the priest, terrified, begs the King to spare the ancient, honored house of Rohan greatest scandal at this moment when in his high office he must appear before the wealth and rank of France. Marie Antoinette, fearing the King's too quickly changing moods, now breaks her silence in a trembling voice burdened with the increasing torture of this outrage. "How is it possible, monsieur le cardinal, that you can have believed I would entrust you with such a matter, you to whom in eight years I have spoken not one word ?" She is sure the cardinal is right in feeling that the weight of scandal will inevitably fall on him and him alone when all has been brought forth in public explanation, yet she can weep for her own temporary shame, and her tears move the King to action and to say: "Sir, I shall console your relatives as best I may, and I desire that you shall justify yourself, but I must perform my double duty. I am King and husband." It is the Queen, who first of all must be unquestionably justified. She has listened long enough and laughed at silly scandal. Now there

shall be no further taking of her name in vain. Calumny shall be vanquished once for all and great shall be its punishment.

The sun goes under a cloud, the great gathering waits impatiently, amazed at every moment of this long delay. The doors open. Pale, tall, self-possessed, the Grand Almoner appears, followed by victorious Breteuil who cries loudly to the captain of the guards: "Arrest monsieur le cardinal !" Confusion grips the crowd. Had Rohan kept his head in the great presence he might have saved himself and monarchy. Now it is too late; disgrace has come. But in the moment's surge and whispering of the court, in the instant's hesitation of the officer, the cardinal snatches the chance to scribble a word, to pass it to a messenger who rushes to his house, burns the false letters which the prince had treasured, read, and reread, rejoicing in the promised favors of an imagined queen whose shadowy substance has now faded from him. Proudly, though like a captured thief, the rich-robed priest traverses the great hall. The sun comes out to stare, the mirrors flash the crowd at him with his poor image in its midst. Versailles the chapel and Versailles the court have closed against him doors of church and state, and heavy Bastille walls will presently surround him.

Marie Antoinette, sure of a just victory, has had no thought of friends who might support her enemy. She sees him left alone, she sees herself with reputation cleared, honored, and loved as majesty should be. "All that touches the honor of the Queen should be brought straight before the public eye," said Mercy, apropos of that woman Cahouet de Villars who used the name of Marie Antoinette to aid her in embezzlement of funds. Is not this true of a more serious outrage ? No. The aunts are furious that this matter was not kept secret. Polignacs and that friend of Rohan, treacherous Vaudreuil, are unexpectedly unsympathetic. The prince de Conti's Rohan

wife sets all the Conti family against the Queen, and every Rohan is a partisan of the cardinal. The comtesse de Brionne's strong influence, the Sorbonne, the Parlement, the various enemies of Breteuil's tactlessness, the clergy, Calonne, the pamphleteers and Palais-Royal orators, the journalists all make out that the Grand Almoner is the victim of a guilty queen. She has made of him a fashion she can never follow. Hats called *cardinal* are worn by fashionable women fearlessly. Men carry ivory snuff-boxes emblazoned with devices dedicated to the cardinal's innocence. Rome is furious at French tyranny. And there are those who had not cared for Rohan but who take his side because they care still less for Marie Antoinette whose larger court is, for the moment, dull and joyless, while, in the Bastille, Rohan holds high state.

Still she may hope, for the trial is not yet. Her head is high in spite of what she sees in passing faces which she scornfully defies. And still frivolity will be gay at her command, and she can triumph on her stage at Trianon as we have seen. She carries her determination one step further; this fall she orders still another theatre to be built in that empty corner of the palace which was once to have been Gabriel's great stairway. Another theatre ? Why, when every kingly residence has one at least ? It is the royal will. Here in this small attractive auditorium each week a comedy, a tragedy, or an *opéra-comique* is well attended. When there is music, there is sure to be the Queen, but her thoughts are on the great event, and she neglects to wonder if the courtiers who still move, however unwillingly, at her command, will always be thus outwardly subservient to her desire. She has written to her brother: "All was decided by the King and me; the ministers knew nothing till the cardinal was summoned to appear before us. I have been deeply touched by the reasonableness and firmness of the King in this trying affair. His con-

duct has been perfect, and his devotion I shall not forget. I wish this horror and all its details to be clearly understood by the public."

All the details; she does not know them yet. Nor will she know them four months later when she writes: "Charlatan Cagliostro, Monsieur and Madame de La Motte and a street-walker named Oliva — what associates for a Grand Almoner and a Rohan Cardinal !" Is he not obviously guilty ? Month by month, detail by detail, while all Europe talks and guesses, the facts about these characters come forth. What and who are they ?

Marie Antoinette will never believe the cardinal's all but incredible credulity. She is certain that he does not really care for her. He has no judgment; he is always ready to spend money for frivolity and for ambition. How did such a man become Grand Almoner ? Court intrigues, family strength, written promises filched from the old King, offset the steady opposition of Marie Antoinette.

The cardinal knows Cagliostro whose clownish antics and false eloquence please a crowd or a Rohan helped to faith by quackery. Before long the Grand Almoner feels he cannot live without his dear magician, does not feel the slightest need of caution in regard to one who hypnotizes his disciple into crystal-gazing at a queen most cardinally inclined.

And now there comes by accident into the life of Rohan a woman called La Motte — a pretty, clever creature with a tale of woe. She tells him her ancestral bastard royal blood has been legitimized, and she persuades him that she is a lady most unfortunate, deserving of his generosity. Seeing her frequently, talking to her many times in several years, he doubts not one of her astonishingly bold assertions, and, while he learns nothing of her, she finds that he has written letters of devotion to Marie Antoinette who has disdained to open them. "But," says La Motte whose boast is favor with the Queen

who does not know, has never seen her, "the Queen confides in me. I know she cares for you." Years ago, a woman, Goupil, offered to gain for him the Queen's friendship by means of funds that he should furnish. The cardinal remembers that two years ago an obscure woman of the Villars type, made quite a stir as friend of majesty. La Motte's words may be true. It seems the Queen does have such friends, discredited if indiscreet; but this La Motte is cautious, she will not be caught. And yet the cardinal finds that Marie Antoinette still speaks no word to him at court. "How can she ?" says La Motte. "Must she not hide her thoughts ?"

La Motte hides hers: forgery, with help of one Villette who will write letters (dictated by La Motte) from the Queen to the Grand Almoner. One by one come letters from her majesty, La Motte the postman, the cardinal transported by a favor he had thought impossible. More letters, still more faith and no examination; and now a promise to meet him in the park one night — La Motte will tell him when — soon — now. Come quickly; the park is silent, dark: no star, no moon, only the sound of night birds and the fountains' play, the crunch of gravel under foot. In the corner of the gardens nearest the Queen's rooms, behind the high wall of the stone stairway leading from the lower entrance to the great terrace, in a circle of pines and tulip trees, the cardinal stands wrapped in his long black mantle. His eyes had grown accustomed to the darkness while he walked. They gaze out from under the wide brim of his hat in credulous enchantment at that tall figure in loose white dress which, at last year's salon, in a frame, made for itself a name in keeping with this secret apparition of the Queen. A rose falls from her hand; he kneels and kisses the hem of her robe; she murmurs and he hears: "You may have hope; the past shall be forgotten." He has risen, bowed, and whispered ardent thanks when suddenly the vision vanishes. Returning quickly through the night to

dream in his room of all good fortune realized, he cannot hear the distant shrieks of laughter nor the words: "If you could have seen him kneeling to that woman, that gentle fool Oliva whom we found in Paris, the very image of the Queen!" But laughter is a waste of time; La Motte must use the cardinal's credulity for instant profit. Will he now hand out money at a forged request? Yes, he will do anything for *Marie Antoinette de France*. Mme de La Motte has mastered him.

And now when she has made of him her slave, an opportunity for enormous gain is at her door. She learns of a necklace which the Queen's jewellers Böhmer and Bassenge must sell or suffer heavy loss. The King twice offered it to Marie Antoinette but she refused it twice, and said: "France needs another battleship, I need no more diamonds. If you were to buy this necklace for me, France would talk." Böhmer threatens suicide, and the Queen tells him to be sensible: "Go, sell the necklace stone by stone." But Böhmer hesitates and in his hesitation meets the male and female named La Motte.

Another letter from the Queen requests the cardinal to advance money for the purchase of the necklace for which she will pay on the installment plan, the first deposit to be made by her on six-months' distant August first. Rohan shows the jewellers the signature — *Marie Antoinette de France* — and they, like him, are fooled. They let him have the necklace; he gives it to La Motte who is to take it to the Queen who will wear it soon, the woman says; but days and weeks go by. "Why has she kept it hidden?" asks the cardinal. "She has her reasons," says La Motte. Later, again the question; and the answer: "She has decided not to wear it till the money has been paid."

The day of first installment is approaching, and La Motte must add a sequel to her tale. Suddenly shifting her course,

she tells the jewellers they have been duped: that the Queen has never had the least idea of such a purchase: that the cardinal is rich and will pay all. The jewellers rush in panic to Versailles; can see no higher personage than Mme Campan. Why do they not tell the cardinal what La Motte has just told them ? They dare not. For other reasons he himself is worried, having lately seen a specimen of the Queen's handwriting in the possession of his relatives. There can be no doubt; he cannot any longer think those letters brought him by La Motte were written by her majesty. Yet there may still be hope; he need not wake at this early hour from his dream; it is not yet morning; he will sleep again, though Cagliostro whispers wisely in his ear: "You have been tricked. Go throw yourself at the King's feet." But he turns his face the other way and listens to his own questions. Ought he to sacrifice La Motte ? Has she not, poor woman, been no less victimized than he by swift credulity ? May there not be some miracle of salvation in delay ? These thoughts persuade him that he is not merely moved by fear. He does not know, moreover, that the necklace has been scattered over Europe, stone severed from stone by a knife in La Motte's hands; sold stone by stone in France and England by the husband of La Motte.

The Queen had summoned Mme Campan to read with her the part of Rosine in *The Barber of Seville* soon to be played at Trianon, and had learned of strange talk her lady-in-waiting had just had with Böhmer for whom the Queen now sends an urgent call. He tells her only half the story, for he does not know it all. She bids him go and write the memoir that plays so great a part on that Assumption Day. And now alone, she gives herself to deepest anger and despair. Scandal has pursued her kindness to her friends. Here it has followed her relentless coldness to a cardinal. She half remembers that,

some weeks before, the King had given her a jewelled trinket which Böhmer brought her with a note she had not had the time to read before he left, due to a moment's interruption. Then, having read it, she sent someone to bring Böhmer back to clarify a veiled illusion to a great set of diamonds he was glad to think she soon would have. But Böhmer had already left the palace. Why force him to return? Was he not slightly mad? That erstwhile threat of suicide — and then this note. Let him go; think no more about him and his nonsense. But now she sees that Böhmer must have thought she understood, because she had not questioned him. Thus by a series of reticences, insinuations, the very fact of secrecy incumbent upon all, a possible discovery was forestalled. Concealment has been disastrous. Publicity is the obvious remedy.

These and a thousand other details have come out between an August and the following March. Cagliostro, Oliva, even La Motte are all in jail. The clever woman had herself been fooled, thinking the cardinal would pay all, silently, to make scandal dumb. To appear not guilty she had stayed in France, living luxuriously on the sale of diamonds. Caught and questioned she lies and contradicts herself in vain. Sentenced to be branded she will swear, bite, kick, tear her clothes, rave like a lunatic — still she is regarded as the victim of the Queen. Marked and ruined she will escape, some say, with royal help, to find a means of vengeance in her power: to publish memoirs (aided by Calonne) which make her out to have been ruined by the immorality and cruelty of Marie Antoinette.

Why did the King permit his enemy the Parlement to try the cardinal ? He could have acted alone in the matter, but only that body could bring the whole affair before the public. The Parlement has snatched its opportunity and the people sing a song of Rohan:

Le Saint-Père l'avait rougi,
Le Roi et la Reine l'ont nourci,
Le Parlement le blanchira,
Allélulia!

On the day of judgment all Rohans have assembled in the great hall of the Palace of Justice where Mme de Marsan speaks in mingled warning and supplication to the bewigged oracles of equity: "Sirs, you are about to judge us all." These gentlemen, rising when the cardinal takes his departure, bestow on him a special honor. Rohans and the Paris populace have demanded his acquittal and they have had their way which is the Parlement's, which is deliberately insulting to the Queen, and, through her, to the monarchy. Paris strews flowers for the cardinal, escorts him to his house, wakes him early in the morning, calls him to the balcony to receive the tribute of applause amid illuminations, wishing that these shouts could reach the Queen's ears and these lights her eyes. She knows enough of them, writing to Mme de Polignac from Versailles: "Come, weep with me, console me, I am bathed in tears of sorrow and despair in thinking of this dreadful verdict. What ingratitude ! But I will conquer my enemies by doing thrice the good that I have always tried to do them. It will be easier for them to wound me than to make me seek revenge" — a moment's thought. Vengeance she naturally wants, has striven for it and will strive again. These insolent Rohans ! They flaunt their mourning at court when the cardinal by royal command, in answer to the judgment in his favor, is deprived of the office of Grand Almoner and sent away to exile. The King might have relented, but the Queen demanded ruthlessness. She cannot, does not doubt that she is hated very bitterly. This knowledge makes her still more arrogantly proud in public, but in private she gives way to scenes

of desperate and distracting pain. "Woe to the nation in which such rank injustice can prevail!" — her hands are clenched, her eyes stare wildly, and for a moment, she detests all France, while calumny, instinctively aware of royal anger, laughs and resolves to tempt her to speak openly, that France may hate her still more bitterly, and drag her still further downward, step by step.

It is by no means certain that to have shrouded the whole affair in secrecy would have saved her, for calumny could have unveiled it, and announced that guilt had made oblivion seem the wiser plan. Queen Elizabeth wrote Mary Stuart that her reluctance to investigate the Darnley murder had no good effect upon her reputation. This was, of course, a trap. Yet in these cases, scandal can work both ways; and, given all the circumstances of this matter, though nothing could have done more harm than public trial, immediate suppression might have been a complete failure. This fatal necklace which the Queen never wore and had determined not to wear, marked her as if the guillotine might need a sign for future guidance; as if, branded more deeply than La Motte, the Queen had hereby been proclaimed disreputable, never again to be believed, always to be found guilty on suspicion, always treacherous, always disloyal to the King. Each bit of news against her travelled now more swiftly than before from court to Paris, and from Paris to all France.

While she sat waiting at Versailles for the birth of her fourth child the King visited Cherbourg to inspect the new fortifications. In Normandy he was cheered and warmly greeted all along the way, as if the people meant to show a marked distinction between their love for a good King, their hatred of a guilty Queen. When he returned he hugged his son the duc de Normandie: "My child, your name will bring you luck."

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PORTRAIT BY DUPLESSIS
1772-73

Nevertheless, in spite of everything, this fall at Fontainebleau the Queen was again surrounded by a brilliant, flattering court. Polignac supremacy was on the wane, too late to help her whose responsibility was fixed. The Queen still loved her favorite but she disapproved of certain friends of generous Gabrielle. "Because your Majesty honors my rooms with your presence is no reason why I should be expected to exclude all others for whom I care." Obedience was judged preferable to inconsiderate friendship and Mme d' Ossun would do anything to please the Queen. She was a steady soul, the public could not object to her, but it could still object to Marie Antoinette at Mme d' Ossun's balls where many foreigners were greeted cordially, among them Lord Strathavon whom jealous Polignacs singled out for gossip. Again there was the old story of too much favor shown to men of other countries, but the Queen replied: "These persons do not ask for profits and rewards." Least of all did Fersen seek advantage, but he whom the Queen loved did not cause the scandal that a mere acquaintance, Lord Strathavon, could excite.

During these years Calonne had made things gay, had waved a wand like Cagliostro's and had told the money spenders that with faith in him they might go a-crystal-gazing into a gold-filled treasury. In three years he had borrowed hundreds of millions. "How could I know that France had grown so poor ?" the Queen protested. "When I told Calonne I needed a certain sum he gave me twice the amount." Yet in spite of all his confidence in himself, and of the court in him, he found himself in trouble and called the Notables together, hoping thereby to evade the interference of the antagonistic Parlement. The Notables were summoned for the twenty-ninth of January; they gathered in the capital, they talked, they criticized the monarchy, they chafed at unexplained delay. Finally they were to meet on February 22.

Their comments added to the prevailing tone of discontent. All the salons loved political discussions, everyone had his pet scheme for solving every problem, everyone denounced King and Queen and ministers. In this month of February Vergennes died. He might have helped control the Notables whose convocation had met with his approval. Certainly his pupil, friend, successor, a weak and futile man, "the very little Montmorin," as Marie Antoinette described him, could do nothing. The King, deprived of Vergennes, was more than ever lacking in resourcefulness and courage. Mercy had hoped the Queen would have Saint-Priest who favored Austria appointed to replace Vergennes, but she astonished the ambassador by asserting that foreigners had no right to choose French ministers. France did not hear that she took this stand, but, if it had heard it would not have believed.

Lomenie de Brienne was president of these Notables, of these leaders of the church and state who had been called together now for the first time in the history of Versailles. Lomenie easily turned them against the most unpopular man in France, against Calonne whose post he coveted. The Notables declared the deficit immense, and Marie Antoinette consulted with some of them, was soon persuaded that Calonne must go — a proposition which the King approved. The Polignacs revolted in vain: the Queen was adamant. She had, for the moment, seriously resolved to study the pressing and increasing difficulties of the monarchy. In secret she was sad. "The Queen is often lost in meditation," wrote Mme Elizabeth. "I spend hours of unbroken silence with her. She seems to fear me; yet who is more deeply interested in the King's welfare than I ? She is Austrian [the aunts had taught that word], I am a Bourbon. Our opinions differ. The comte d'Artois has no understanding of the necessity for reform. Monsieur is graver than ever, he who has always been so grave. I fear all this will never come to good."

Reforms indeed were odious to nobles, to Marie Antoinette particularly. Yet, at this time, she made a definite half-frightened effort in economy's behalf, convinced by Notables, as formerly by Necker. Again, as usual, she gained no credit in the mind of France, but many enemies at court who did not share her apprehension. April came and Calonne went. Lomenie de Brienne, who had won applause by fighting him, would have had his place three years ago if Marie Antoinette had had her way. Turgot and Malesherbes had sought to bring him forward in their time, but Maurepas had blocked his path. The manners of this Lomenie, like Calonne's, were pleasing to the ladies, and he seemed to be a man of nobler parts. Mercy supported him, Vermond sang his praises in remembrance of that Austrian mission which made him tutor to Marie Antoinette, by Brienne's recommendation. But the King was hostile to the president of the Notables who was not a proper priest, although he was Archbishop of Toulouse. The Queen, knowing that Louis thought that to send again for Necker would be the equivalent of abdication, cleverly suggested the Genevan. For lack of any substitute, the archbishop was made minister — "a triumph worth seventeen years of waiting," exclaimed Vermond, who now hoped for greater influence. The minister's clumsy gratitude published the predominance of his patroness, and calumny led the nation's chorus: The Queen rules! Hasty reforms, frantic economy that seemed radical, drove Ségur and Castries to haughty resignations which left the ministries of war and of marine at the disposal of Brienne, while calumny adroitly noticed that Marie Antoinette's curtailed expenses were still far greater than those of her predecessor, the wife of Louis XV. The fear of deficit induced panic, the Notables failed to inspire any confidence and they were reduced, before their dissolution, to call the States General. The Queen knew well that La Fayette had faith in this distasteful remedy. When, in May, the Notables

came to take their leave of Louis, they met along the way, a group arranged as if by chance to greet them: four futile figures — Marie Antoinette and her three children.

The summer brought another sorrow: the fourth royal child, born a year ago, had died. "She would have been a friend," her mother said. In order that a crowd of courtiers might offer their commiserations, Louis and Marie Antoinette were bound to hold a painful, tedious reception. And the Queen who mourned her second daughter's death, noticed the failing health of her first son.

In the absence of the Notables, the Parlement continued to exercise its opposition. It would not register the decrees which monarchy demanded; it repeated the cry that from the mouths of Notables spread over France: The States General alone can avert the bankruptcy which no one has done so much to bring about as Marie Antoinette. Anger had grown so great against her that officers of the police warned her not to show herself in Paris. A *lit de justice* could not bring the Parlement to terms. It still defied the monarchy just as it had defied the Queen by the acquittal of the cardinal. Well, then, with Brienne's help, the Parlement, like Rohan, could be exiled. But it continued to be insolent at Troyes. The fatuous King allowed it to return, to save itself from Brienne's trap — a false offer to summon the States General in five years. Peace could not be bought by counterfeit. The King tried to force a loan, but Orléans called the demand illegal. Louis replied: "I wish it, therefore it is lawful." Too late, the Parlement perceived. There was no power in his words which on the Sun King's lips would have intimidated France. Orléans was exiled and thereby made popular, while the nation more and more impatiently called for the States General. Brienne and Marie Antoinette had plans for a "New Order," a strong support for a strong king; but the support was all too weak, having this quality in common with the King. Thus

dragged onward to December a futile year of monarchy.

The Dauphin's health did not improve that winter; and the Queen had only one consoling thought: Mme Royale was well, the duc de Normandie as strong as a young peasant.

In April the hard-won friendship of Holland was lost by France and gained by England; and Austria rejoiced that France faced a triple alliance of the North. Dauphiny and Brittany revolted, and La Fayette, distrusted by the Queen for having favored the States General Assembly at a meeting of the Notables, incurred her more intense displeasure by an appearance of disloyalty in regard to these uprisings. But he dared to say: "I belong to Brittany, just as your majesty belongs to the House of Austria." She managed therefore to deprive him of his command which she obtained for him when he returned from America.

In spite of all that Marie Antoinette could do, the States General were summoned for the following May. The scheme of a "New Order" had failed. All France had learned to hate Lomenie de Brienne, whose patroness at last admitted that there must be another change of ministry. "I doubt if Necker would come back if Brienne stays," she wrote Mercy, "but in all truth and conscience we cannot sacrifice him who has lost his reputation and may lose his life in our defence. Whom, then, can we place at the head of affairs ? There must be someone to act as a restraint on Necker. The personage above me [the King] cannot be the one, and as for me, whatever people say, my position always is a secondary one." A few days later Brienne was dismissed. "The bishop is gone," she again addressed Mercy. "I cannot tell you how this day has affected me. I believe that it was necessary for Brienne to go, but it may cause us trouble with the Parlement. I tremble — forgive my weakness — when I think that it is I who am responsible for the return of Necker. My misfortune is to bring bad luck to everyone, and if infernal machina-

tions cause Necker once again to fail, or if he should lessen the authority of the King, I shall be detested all the more."

Paris, joyous over Brienne's fall, heard of a cardinalship, of riches for retiring bishops' relatives; and therefore Necker's reinstatement reflected no credit on the Queen. Her generosity to the unpopular minister whom she admired had generally been interpreted to mean she had attempted both to keep her friend and to defeat his successor. Whereas, if it had been known that Necker's coming was her work, her power would have been condemned. She now felt she had gained and could gain nothing by the efforts she had made in Brienne's time. She could but hope that Necker's ingenuity might be of service, and she abandoned the idea of setting up a counterbalance to his authority. She knew that France, at first, would think she tried to hide her inveterate activity, but she believed the nation would eventually weary of exaggerating her influence. She dreaded the meetings of the great assembly so near Paris, the scene of general discontent; but when she asked Necker if court and elective body might move away next year and settle in some distant town, the minister replied that this would cost too much. She thought that not to go would cost still more.

Sad thoughts carry her along the way that she has come, and show her many well-remembered landmarks. She recalls a conversation with the comte de Tilly, some six years ago. "Were you at the opera the last time I was there?" "Yes, madame." "What have I done to fail of all but very slight applause?" "I did not notice that the Queen . . ." "Come now, you cannot fail to see what I mean. But it is not my fault. So much the worse for Paris." The comte de Tilly failed to prevent her tears which at that time soon ceased to flow. Three years later she could note how far antagonism had progressed. In vain at Saint-Cloud she lived unostenta-

tiously; in vain she tried to mingle with the crowd as she did when her reign began. The people said they came to see the fountains and the Austrian woman, as if she were a foreign curiosity. When she heard whispers she proudly raised her head to hide humiliation, and the whispers instantly increased. Indignant, deeply hurt, she retired to her room. One morning Mme Campan found her weeping bitterly. "These wicked monstrous people! What have I done to them? I wish that I were dead." She had been reading scandals, libels, infamies brought to her daily at her command, more vile, more horrible this morning than before. Yet for no reason she was suddenly comforted. One day at the opera she bowed and smiled only to hear a sharp ironic whistle which destroyed the effect of a moment's loud applause. Not long afterward she heard that, at a performance of *Athalie,* lines full of hatred for that proud queen had been cheered in reference to the Queen of France. Even her portraits had been jeered, as if the artist had intended to hold up Marie Antoinette to scorn, whereas she knew that Mme Vigée-Lebrun had learned in painting Marie Antoinette to love her. One of these portraits represented her in long loose muslin dress referred to by the public as *chemise,* a costume worn deliberately in scorn of etiquette and with the intention of ruining the French makers of rich fabrics. Then, in another portrait, Marie Antoinette in an elaborate robe was promptly nicknamed Mme Deficit, for little ingenuity was required to find fault with anything she wore or said or did. It was no longer what she did but she that did it who was in the wrong. She remembers that last ball in the palace, and her dismay at finding she could not induce the courtiers to dance. They saw that it would wound her to decline, and only those who cared still more for dancing than for humiliating her, would occupy the floor. These few were not enough to fill the space, to make the entertainment a success, and they were made con-

spicuous by the blaze of lights; they gave the merry tunes a mournful sound, and the gay laughter seemed a pointed mockery.

She thinks of the last gatherings of the royal family, at suppers held in Madame's rooms to which each member brings his own provisions as if for a picnic. Madame herself makes her famous *potage aux petits oiseaux.* Servants set the table, then retire. Royalty sits down, finds everything at hand; the doors are closed but laughter in this room is heard outside. Sometimes the Queen, having lately dined, brings her sewing, and joins only in the conversation. At eleven the King summons the waiters to clear the table. Marie Antoinette cannot foresee that with the summer of Versailles' final year it will be found expedient to meet in the well-guarded rooms of Marie Antoinette, already watched as if in imitation of a prison. Here the royal family will not waive petty troubles in the common peril; here Monsieur and Artois surrender to incessant quarrelling and jealousy.

These disagreements are forgotten only in the bitter animosity felt by princes and by princesses toward Marie Antoinette. Supported morally by cloistered Sister Louise who still loves intrigue, redoubtable old Mme Adelaide comes to the King to criticize the Queen, and goes back angrily to Bellevue where she is commanded to remain and where she spends her money with additional Condé and Orléans contributions to calumny's campaign. Condé, like many other noblemen, resents the fact that Marie Antoinette attempted to work in favor of reform; and Orléans can forget her recent influence which shortened his exile, but remembers her remote decision to take her brother's side against a peer of France; her irony and lack of faith in Orléans' courage and ability in battle, and her refusal of her daughter's hand to a Palais-Royal heir. One day she points out the duke to an English friend: "That man hates and has

sworn to ruin me. I see it in his eyes. He will not be content until he sees me dead." From his palace of the Luxembourg Monsieur distributes caricatures some of which, they say, he draws with his own hand. Artois has been enraged by Marie Antoinette's support of double representation for the third estate, a measure upon which Necker had insisted, and by which she has acquired many titled enemies. Mme Elizabeth is not aware of her brother's treacherous inclinations, but she alone of all the relatives is loyal, without ambition, to the crown. Except for her and for the King there is at court no royal friend of foreign royalty; and France which hates the nobles, hates still more the Queen those nobles hate.

The weather is in league with scandal: a summer's hailstorm ruins crops; the coldest of remembered winters follows. Versailles sits glittering and shivering; the Seine is frozen over; the poor are dying. Paris is divided into two unequal parts: the greater, furiously discontent, heaps every accusation on a helpless monarchy; the smaller wraps itself in riches, dances, laughing at the cold outside and at Versailles where gaiety no longer reigns. The Queen hears that Rohan is elected to the States General. Do all her enemies prosper ? Which of them does not ? Day by day this dreary winter will loosen its icy grip, but there is to be no comfort in the spring. Rather an old snow-laden France than the new nation which is coming to destroy Versailles, in imitation of the ocean that in ancient days flowed over Ys. The Queen is watching, waiting hopelessly; she would prefer all tempests to the approach of deputies to the States-General Assembly: "You know," she writes, "the popular conviction that millions have been sent to Austria by me who cannot fail to be accused of full responsibility. You know the general belief in my predominating influence. Imagine, then, the odious part they will decide that I have played !" She knows that calumny thrives on Orléans'

money, telling its story of the farcical failure of this reign of errors for which lack of judgment is the sole and pitiful excuse.

If even this were all the tale! But it is the truest and the smallest part of it. From its first faintest breath to its last loudest roar, calumny has spread news of treachery, more treachery, always treachery. Frivolously false to etiquette, to a queen's outward proper show; frivolously false as wife and queen to the respect which is the King's inalienable right; frivolously false to that great solemn rôle of queen in having played quite different parts in compromising privacy; frivolously false to the financial needs of France — all these disloyalties had been frivolous. Calumny, full of them and still unsatisfied, hungered for signs of deliberate, active faithlessness: of treason toward the King and toward the state which careless, youthful gaiety could not explain, could not excuse. This double treason calumny has found: treason to the King rewarded by a diamond necklace; treason to the State by means of money sent to Austria.

And now the Queen, deserted by the tottering old regime she cannot understand, is face to face with a new France which she will still more deeply fail to comprehend. And this new France, born of a thousand long-endured oppressions, will see in her the likeness of the portrait which calumny has painted, the full infuriating embodiment of the indifference, treachery, intolerance, and cruelty which have weighed upon successive victims of a monarchy grown weak and foolish, destined to struggle only to make certain its defeat.

CHAPTER VI

THE FALL OF VERSAILLES

. . . déjà s'amasse la nuit sombre.

— SAMAIN

THE DEPUTIES to the States General gathered at Versailles and walked in the warm May air under the fresh green leaves that faintly shaded the great park. The representatives of France insisted upon seeing every corner of the palaces, confident of finding endless evidence of Marie Antoinette's extravagance. No one could persuade them that no diamond-studded wall existed. The Queen remembering that old rumor concerning Trianon's theatre, was much amused and, laughing, told the King. She also laughed with Artois and her friends at the peculiar costumes, manners, names of these visitors, and her amusement was brought to calumny's attention. Versailles the town did not laugh with Versailles the court; it honored and rejoiced in these people from the provinces. The Queen aware that although certain deputies were ludicrous at court their purpose threatened monarchy, decided to exchange levity for graciousness when members of the third estate offered her their special services. "I have but one request: that you treat the interests and the wishes of the King with all the deep respect which is their due."

The royal pageantry of carriages pulled by high-plumed horses, accompanied by mounted pages, by falconers with birds on wrists, proceeded on May 4 from the palace to the church of Notre Dame, whence with the deputies who had gathered at that point, court and assembly walked two thousand strong across the great Place d'Armes as if passing in review before

the palace to the cathedral of Saint-Louis. The King, carrying a wax taper, wore cloth of gold sprinkled with diamonds. The Queen blazed in crown jewels, but her sad, proud face seemed to await and to defy a silent crowd. A thundering cry of *"Vive le duc d'Orléans!"* did not surprise her, yet she faltered, almost fell, and then recovered her composure, continued to endure the stony, steady stare of many pairs of eyes. She saw the poor sick Dauphin lying on cushions on a balcony above the mob. She smiled at him and he at her, and she remembered that his birth had made the nation cheer the mother of another king. Now, like a helpless monarchy, he could not move the people.

At the cathedral door the insolent duchesse d'Orléans irritated Marie Antoinette; the priest annoyed her by dwelling on the inefficiency of government; the congregation insulted her by applauding him, and at the close of this exasperating day, the Queen exclaimed: *"Ces indignes français!"* to which Mme Adelaide caustically retorted: *"Dîtes indignés, Madame."* That night the Queen could neither rest nor sleep.

In the morning she braved a crowd upon a stage set for vain monarchical display in the hall of Menus-Plaisirs, where former kings had come to be amused. At the left of the throne an armchair for the Queen, stools for the princesses; at the right, folding chairs for the princes; along the right wall, benches for the clergy; along the left, benches for the nobility; and in the centre, as if to be crushed by encircling privilege, sat the third estate. When the awkward King arrived in gorgeous costume, the Assembly rose. The Queen, in velvet mantle over white and silver, wearing diamonds and a heron's plume in fading hair, had never so superbly looked the part of sovereign. Her present lack of slimness, in contrast to the King's, created the effect of more imposing strength. The King removed his hat; the Queen appeared to think this deference excessive; they exchanged a moment's whispered talk;

then took their places, and the Queen surveyed unfriendly faces. Behind the enmity of Orléans she imagined hidden power. She may have noticed Mirabeau's huge head; he held it scornfully when murmuring deputies moved away from him. The space they left had soon been filled by tardy delegates, and he had gathered France about him.

The King spoke; the Queen stood at his side, in secret consciousness of his futility. "I was born a despot, I shall remain a despot, but I shall be always an enlightened despot." She sat severely proud while others spoke, convulsive movements of her fan betraying agitation. When she had risen grandly to depart, she was astonished to hear shouts of *"Vive la Reine !"* She smiled and bowed and the applause increased.

Encouraged for the moment, Marie Antoinette attemped to win the deeper favor of the deputies. She ordered that the gardens of Versailles be open to them day and night, and she obtained their free admission to the theatres of the town. But calumny had fixed her alleged character in their minds, and no reality of her kindness could seem to them sincere. Repeated rumors claimed that she supported Artois in opposition to reform; and the Assembly forgot that moment when it had greeted her; and she resigned herself to inactivity, hoping as at the time of Brienne's fall, that calumny would weary of attacking her.

On the day of Saint-Louis came varied friendly groups to greet their majesties: a deputation of municipal officials; La Fayette (now a member of the Assembly in spite of his loss of military office a year ago) arrived with other men; and there was, as usual, on this occasion, a set of market-women. Marie Antoinette expected that with due deference the mayor of Paris would kneel before her, but, instead, he merely bowed, intending no offence. Outraged, defied, she gave him, in return, a slight and haughty inclination of her head. Red with anger she had not sufficiently recovered herself to greet prop-

erly M. Blondinet and his attendants, nor, after them, the women, who, departing, muttered plots of vengeance. The marquis could forgive her, but she remembered that he had implied a doubt of her loyalty to France a year ago, and she could not forgive him.

Anger and humiliation were for the moment lost in the sorrow of the Dauphin's illness made more unbearable by the Queen's conviction that not only he but all who were dear to her could never prosper. In gloomy meditation she saw one night four candles burning in her room. She watched the flames, saw one of them go out. No breeze had touched it. The second, mysteriously extinguished, startled her; the third terrified her. "If the fourth follows it," she whispered, "I am doomed." Then the last light went out. She stared into the darkness, sure that her son would catch the infection of her fate, like those four flames which died in the still air.

Sometimes she dined with the child at his request, and tried to hide her tears. Day by day she watched him crippled, withering, until one afternoon in early June the King drove out to Meudon where his heir was dying. Entreated not to enter the Dauphin's room, he cried: "My boy is dead." The doctor answered: "No, but most dangerously weak." The Queen came in, threw herself at her husband's feet, sobbed in convulsive, overpowering grief. In deep despair she whispered: "Let us hope"; and, in an hour, her son was dead. Her daughter died two years ago; how long would she retain the remaining boy and girl ? The King and Queen returned to shut themselves in palace rooms. The second day had not gone by when deputies from the Assembly demanded admittance to discuss affairs, after hurrying through perfunctory expressions of their sympathy. When they were gone: "Are there no fathers among the representatives of France ?" the King wondered.

Neither did there appear to be the slightest pity for afflicted

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PORTRAIT BY DROUAIS
1773-74

royalty in the hearts of noblemen. The prince de Conti led the discontented peers. He told Monsieur the very existence of the monarchy was at stake; and titled persons talked as they had never dared to do since Frondean days of civil war. They heaped their criticisms on the King; they made him jealous of the Assembly's obstinate progressive strength. He feared that Necker was no faithful servant, while the Queen dreaded each new hour.

Once more the King clutched at authority beyond his grasp. The deputies gathering as usual one morning found their meeting-place closed by royal order. Carpenters were busy there with new stage settings, for monarchy was again rehearsing a part it could no longer play. The King had forgotten that he shut this hall a little while ago in futile opposition to a play by Beaumarchais. Therefore he did not wonder how he could hope to censure a performance upon which the will of France had set its seal. Figaro, ejected from the Salle des Menus-Plaisirs, had gone wandering to other theatres; the actors that were France splashed through the rain and found an empty tennis court.

Louis came proudly to his remodelled hall where he had invited the orators of the tennis court to bend their knees before him, to listen to commands that he could memorize but not enforce. He rose. The Queen bowed in proud acknowledgment of his permission that she keep her seat. She knew that this speech would be longer than that other one she stood that last month to hear, yet if she had stood for days she could have given no more than honor to these empty phrases; she could but hope the liberalities they offered would soften antagonism to her claim that France could never question the prerogative of France's King. A little more than twenty years before, Louis XV had said with solemn, sovereign success: "I am the supreme authority, the rights and interests of the people are my own, and I alone have power to direct them

and to make them prosper." The last of Versailles' Kings now vainly proclaimed his will, then moved in awkward splendor back to his palace followed by the Queen, by nobles, bishops, but not by the third estate which, likewise, had been ordered to depart, but sat awaiting its great leader's word. Within an hour came little bejewelled Dreux-Brézé tinkling with etiquette. Mirabeau thundered at a childish monarch's doll: "Tell your master we are here by order of the people, and only force can drive us out !" Like an automaton, moving backward in obedience to all commands, the messenger respectfully retired. Was the King no better than his valet ? Could he not use the force which Mirabeau suggested ? That force now worked the other way. The Assembly had usurped the right of inviolability, and violence hung by a thread above the King's head. He could at least punish Necker who had been treacherously absent from that royal session, knowing the King and Queen had counted on his support, knowing also that his absence would gain for him a popularity more useful than the gratitude of a prince whom no one feared.

The King could not prevent a reunion of the deputies. Therefore, within a week, he asked them to meet again together as they had intended. As if this mimicry of free will were not enough without the addition of inconsistency, a military force was summoned to converge on Paris, on Versailles, while angry courtiers met nightly in the rooms of Lamballe or of Polignac, set upon turning their defeat to victory; and calumny reported that these reactionaries, aided by the Queen, were inciting officers in palace park to rise against the nation, to surround and save the throne.

Monarchy, still capable of arousing praise when it obeyed the people, was for the moment greeted when the King appeared before the reassembled States General; and he was escorted back by cheering deputies joined by a crowd that gathered underneath the balcony demanding that the King

appear, and then the Queen. She made her entrance with the Dauphin in her arms. The people crying: "After the good King, the good minister," rushed away to Necker's house; but King and Queen still dared to overlook the popularity of this man; they had resolved that he should fall again. She had wept when the Genevan failed to give Louis' speech the recognition it deserved: a failure which marked him for her as a determined enemy. Moreover she had listened to her friends who hated Necker, and she did not fear the anger of Paris more than she feared this man.

Necker was at dinner on July 11 when he received an order to leave France at once. He finished his meal and went. Next day, Paris, already agitated by military concentrations, heard of its favorite minister's disgrace, and rushed into revolution. Versailles, with no idea a crisis was at hand, decided upon unpopular Breteuil, the friend of Marie Antoinette, as Necker's successor, and upon inefficient Broglie as minister of war. Further than this there was no plan in Louis' mind; and the Queen knew not what to do. Posters in Palais-Royal gardens put a price upon the heads of Artois and the Queen, and the King's forces, attempting to keep order in the capital, were, in effect, the cause of more determined insurrection.

Louis could not hear a distant hoarse and choking battle cry; he could not see the smoke which hid his fortress — the Bastille. He heard the name, he pondered on the thickness of old walls. Messengers flew past each other on the road from Paris to Versailles where incredulity was at war with apprehension. The Bastille was strong — the Bastille had withstood long centuries of hatred — the Bastille was a stone no human hands could tear apart. The messengers more thickly came and went and at last Versailles stared with open mouth — the Bastille had been captured by a mob. Versailles slept but did not dream that night of the increasing strength of Paris.

The duc d'Orléans, terrified or treacherous, came to Ver-

sailles to offer friendly-seeming, futile mediation between the court which he should have been defending and the capital which he did not represent. He faltered on the great stairway, muttered something about wanting leave of absence, and departed without having seen the King. Louis, in answer to the howls of Paris, obediently entered the Assembly, announcing the withdrawal of his troops. Once more the flattering deputies escorted him to his palace where again upon the balcony the Queen bowed, accompanied this time by Artois' children in addition to her own. She felt the irony of applause that testified to monarchy's disguised defeat; and the King heard voices in the crowd threatening his brother and his wife.

Marie Antoinette could only watch the helpless King, or, if she encouraged any sign of strength, she saw it promptly disappear. There was much talk of Metz, of going there escorted, of returning with collected reinforcements to a royal victory. The Queen was energetic; had her clothes and jewels packed. Even the princes favored this idea and thought the King had at last become intelligent. Then Broglie hesitated and the King followed suit, while Marie Antoinette, sighing, bade her ladies unpack the boxes. Discouraged and disgusted, Condé resolved to emigrate at once, and thereupon the exodus of angry noblemen began. It would have been better for all to go or all to stay than for the House of Bourbon to divide against itself; better if no one had said to Marie Antoinette: "If you and Louis go, the nobles will be massacred in your absence, but if you stay you may depend upon La Fayette's good management." She had believed the former, not the latter condition, whereas neither one was true. She would have preferred to fly and let the threatened aristocracy seek the same safety, but the King stopped her, and told his younger brother not to linger within the reach of France's vengeance. Nevertheless Artois, at Talleyrand's suggestion, made one last attempt to move phlegmatic Louis into action. "It may be

true," the King replied "that only desperate measures can save the throne and crown, but I had rather witness their destruction than shed my subjects' blood." Talleyrand shrugged his shoulders and departed. Artois followed Condé, and the Queen began a series of farewells. Two hundred passports had been issued in two days. Broglie was going, and Vermond who had been near Marie Thérèse's daughter for twenty years. She bade Vaudreuil good-bye. He knelt, she bent over him, he felt her tears and heard these words: "You were right. We know at last that Necker is a traitor. We are lost." He looked at her and saw recovered calmness in her face. She wept again that day forgetting every painful memory, remembering only happiness and affection and the jealous hatred which her devotion had indirectly brought against Gabrielle de Polignac whom she urged to go in search of safety now. "Farewell, tenderest of friends — dreadful, necessary farewell."

Three days after the fall of the Bastille, the Queen sat waiting for bad news. She feverishly wrote a short address to make in the Assembly where she had determined to take her children if that news came. Her carriage waited for her in the palace courtyard; would the King return ? He had gone against his wife's entreaty, to see what welcome there might be for him in Paris. At last she heard the sound of hurrying coach, rushed out to meet him, embraced him with tears of joy. The capital had favorably clamored, but he had failed to say the word, to give the outward show that might have strengthened inclination into firm support. He was aware of his humiliation; he could but sink into the Queen's arms and tell her that he longed to save her, their children, and himself from all the repetitions of disgrace which filled his vision of the future.

Marie Antoinette, surrounded by a host of problems, was forced for the moment to neglect all but one: to find a successor to Mme de Polignac as governess of the Children of

France. She determined to confide to Mme de Tourzel, "to merit," as she said, "the task that had been friendship's charge." She wrote her distant confidant: "Everyone is leaving, and I have but the consolation of the thought that those for whom I care are far from the misfortunes which beset us here. I spend my days in almost unbroken loneliness. My children are my sole resource, and I am with them just as much as possible." She seldom had safe means of sending letters to her friend, and during these last weeks at Versailles she could dispatch only an occasional line, with warnings as to care in answering. "You cannot imagine the intrigues that surround us, and of which I make strange discoveries in my household. Oh, my friend, how sadly I am afflicted! The worst of my miseries is separation from my friends, for I no longer encounter those who understand me, though there are certain persons whose loyalty surprises me. Adversity has diminished neither my strength nor my courage, and it has taught me prudence. Friendship for you is written indelibly in my heart, and I will always think of you, while, for my son's sake, I endure the burden of my lot."

She heard the chatterings of calumny that she had plotted the blowing-up of the Assembly, a massacre of Paris — what horror did she not intend? Assassins might be waiting for her in the gardens, and it was dangerous for her to walk on the great terrace. It seemed to her that she was reading a sequel to the old story that her life had illustrated from the earliest days of childhood — a story of annoyance that now was pain and would be torture; a story of pleasure and happiness destined to frustration, of slight imperfections, trivial mistakes inflated into blackest crimes. First her family, then her realm had risen in opposition to her love of life. What was all this noise and strife that dinned in her ears? Why must France be turned upside down? What good could come of

it? Why must the eighteenth century be condemned for having made life gay, amusing? A revolution cannot make an entire nation rich, for there will always be an inequality of cleverness as well as merit. What evil had she wished for any but for those who had deliberately, unjustly, and persistently attacked her, trying to reduce her life to dullness, to drab virtue, and to insignificance? She had heard moral condemnation of herself like John Knox's diatribes against Mary Stuart and England's puritanical disapproval of Henrietta Maria. If these Queens were far from blameless they did not deserve such rigid censure. At any rate she could determine not to sit by and watch a futile monarch go from bad to worse. She rebelled against such tolerance, she trembled between rage and sorrow, feeling that her actions and her inactivity were alike impossible, agonizing, or useless. She would be resigned to nothing less than absolute necessity, and for her son's sake she would make her courage equal to all woes. She would not, like the King, assume a martyr's attitude. Reading the life of Charles I he said: "I am learning to accept the thought that one day I shall die as he did." Louis foresaw a dismal future, but he could not understand the revolution, neither could his wife. He derived no principal of practical resistance from the misfortunes of Charles I, just as the disasters of Louis XVI's reign were to constitute unprofitable study for the mind of Nicholas II. The King of France asked the duc de Liancourt if the fall of the Bastille were due to a revolt. "No, Sire, it is a revolution." The Queen of France once asked what etiquette would say to her when she fell off her donkey. She wondered now what it would prescribe if the King fell off his throne. The sovereign eighteenth-century remedy was to bleed an invalid; but the King would not consent to bleed the nation. He could think of nothing but to recall Necker whom he thoroughly distrusted. Again France greeted the Genevan

as its only hope, giving the monarchy no credit for the minister's return, reproaching it for having twice disposed of him.

There were successive facts confused by rumors — the fact that Frenchmen feared the Austrian reinforcements which the *émigrés* were gathering; the rumor that an onslaught was at hand; the fact that grain was scarce, the rumor that the King and Queen, intending to starve France, were throwing sacks of grain into the rivers. Monarchy was lost in general confusion and could neither understand the people nor its own condition. Nor could King and Queen perceive the progress of vitiation suffered by the nobility which had long regarded its violence as strength. They still dwelt upon a lack of royal mistresses and could not grasp the selfish uselessness to which a large proportion of the aristocracy had sunk; and they neglected to give wise and firm support to a minority of titled names that stood for serious, practical reforms. They saw that the existing system of taxation was a failure, but they imagined that their efforts to effect a change had proved the impossibility of remedy. They did not know that certain enterprising peasants had found their burdens more intolerable as landowners than as former tillers of a rented soil. They thought that agitators made the trouble; they did not see a rising nation pushing agitators high. They had not noticed that ideas called *philosophes* had enlarged the stream of multitudinous national protests through indiscriminate mouths of servants, scandal-mongers, professors, the learned, and the ignorant. They had no conception of the million elements that contributed to the general menace, that have given to almost every theory of the revolution a grain of relative truth which taken by itself is false, inadequate. Moreover, if they had comprehended the forces linked and growing up against them, they would merely have had recourse to more profound despair, more frantic struggles on the part of Marie Antoinette,

more pitiful submissiveness on Louis XVI's part. Therefore there was for them a hopelessness which gave their destiny a prodigious power.

Scarcity of bread, whisperings that the court had threatened Mirabeau's life, general agitation in a variety of forms led to attempts of mobs to march against Versailles in August and September, but La Fayette had barred the way. Hearing of these surging masses, the King again demanded troops, and now the Flanders Regiment arrived with its good-will toward royalty, under the command of the marquis de Lusignan whose sympathy for the Assembly made Louis think that Paris might welcome the arrival of this officer and his soldiers. But rumors gathered that this was a force to help the King leave France, for in September there had been further talk of moving to the eastern border, or of plans for King and deputies to go to Compiègne or Soissons, there to surround themselves with added military strength. Louis then had another hesitation in spite of Necker's and of Montmorin's advice. He would not leave, but could not stop the news that he intended to escape. Calumny, still full of tales of courtiers encouraging the loyalty of officers to commit atrocities, now saw additional menace in the fact that Marie Antoinette had announced her intention to honor the National Guards by a presentation of two flags blessed in the church of Notre Dame before a special audience; and in the further verified event that on the last night of September the Queen's and royal family's healths were drunk by those to whom her majesty had promised banners.

It was the custom for the body-guards to give a dinner to the officers of all troops visiting Versailles; and the King gave them permission to serve these gentlemen of Flanders Regiment in the Salle d'Opéra on October 1. Ladies in boxes cheered the hosts and guests. Royalty was in the air, the fumes of wine were in the minds of those who breathed it, and the King's health was drunk by his convivial captains. One of

her ladies went to tell the Queen that the sight of this feast might cheer her; but she declined to go. "Your majesty, it would amuse the Dauphin. Take him, I beg." The King was just returning from the hunt. Marie Antoinette, suddenly enchanted by opportunity, induced Louis to prepare appearances. The Salle d'Opéra was bright with light that shone on brilliant military uniforms — the Salle d'Opéra in which the Austrian princess danced her first dance at Versailles, when, nineteen years ago, there was no danger in a royal celebration here. Now monarchy for which these officers had pledged their willingness to die, stood there above them, King and Queen and heir, the incarnation of their faith, the symbol of the glory of all France. The circle of three hundred warriors rose in unanimous, inspired acclaim, loudly requesting royalty to come down, that loyalty might surround it. The King, the Queen with her son in her arms, walked between swords unsheathed, held high in hands raised in defence of sovereignty. Glasses were drained to resolution, while the strains of "Oh ! Richard, oh ! my King, the universe abandons you," sounded the note of surrounding revolution which this small group of faithful friends, cut off from all the world, defied. Who would not acknowledge such a tribute ? Who could calculate mischance at such a time ? Here with her son the Queen transported thrilled with hope; her gracious face was radiant and smiling when these three fated figures, King and Queen and heir, retired forever from such scenes as this; and Marie Antoinette, awakened, dreamed that her son would one day rule this realm as king more kingly than his father.

"I am very happy to have given the flags to the National Guardsmen of Versailles. The army and the nation should trust their King, for he and I have confidence in them. I was enraptured by yesterday's celebration," she proclaimed next morning, and her words were instantly distorted by calumny in France's ear: You see, she loudly welcomed such an orgy,

she loved to hear the nation outraged. She would not let the soldiers drink to France, but she encouraged them to trample on the national cockade, to raise the white one to the skies. She smiled when still another emblem, black and Austrian, called forth applause. "Long live royalty !" was shouted in the streets again today, and will continue to be heard. This was calumny's interpretation; this was the belief of France. What actually happened ? White and black emblems were probably imagined, or perhaps the white backs of national cockades were unintentionally turned around, or, possibly, the more intoxicated officers waved white ribbons which ladies had dropped down from boxes to the table. It might easily have been forgotten to drink the health of the nation which stood for opposition to the royal will. Enthusiasm for the monarchy was probably too absorbing to allow demonstrations of hatred for its enemies. The King and Queen accepted homage, did not demand that execrations of revolt should be expressed. They were happy because they were loved; and if one man shouted: "Down with revolution !" his voice was drowned in fifty shouts of *"Vive le Roi !"*

But there was a stronger, steadier chorus sounding over France, no less intoxicating, growing louder while the other died at early dawn; and some of those who sang in the Salle d'Opéra that first night of October heard the new song in the morning at a distance then more clearly hour by hour till they had learned the melody which they would sing tomorrow. Copies were handed out by those whose pockets bulged with Orléans' money. National Guardsmen sang it while they sat drinking in the cafés. They taught it to the soldiers of the Flanders Regiment who preferred it to the royal tune which their officers had sung; and they agreed with these new comrades that their commanders were the enemies of France.

On the morning of October 5 Versailles still thought that La Fayette, who now commanded the Parisian National Guard,

could control the mobs in Paris. The capital was angrier, hungrier, and more restless than before, but still Versailles was lazily optimistic. A woman with a drum aroused other women; orators performed prodigies of eloquence, and finally several thousand drab determined rioters assembled to proclaim that they would march against the King. La Fayette's entreaties and his threats were vain: his soldiers would not fight women. There was a bridge unbarred across the Seine; to have blockaded it would have been wiser than to make speeches on the Place de Grève. On to Versailles marched women accompanied by men in women's clothes, dragging with them what cannon, pikes, crude implements of destruction they could find; and as they marched the stronger women, not yet out of breath, whose ardor was not dampened by the rain, repeated the calumnies they had been taught: "The Queen alone has made us suffer. She shall pay for it, the bitch." They would teach her to fear them; they would kill her for having stolen their children's bread, for having joined a drunken set of officers in swearing to turn rivers of blood into the streets of Paris. And with these noble purposes they splashed more rapidly along the muddy road.

The optimistic King had heard that Paris, agitated yesterday, was calming down today, and so he rode out hunting. The Queen went sadly through the rain to Trianon, under the yellow leaves, in search of solitude and peace in the enclosure of the place which she had made her own. Beset by restlessness she wandered in her garden, listened to the sounds of drops that fell upon the grass, of her feet that pressed these soggy paths, of rain that splashed into the lake, and to the louder murmur of the rising stream. She was sitting in the shelter of her grotto, thinking of absent friends that once were with her in this park, and of the sunny days, the merry laughter which had left her lonely under clouded skies. She heard someone calling her — a friend, perhaps. Rising to re-

TWO VIEWS OF AN ANONYMOUS PORTRAIT BUST IN WHITE MARBLE

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spond she encountered an expression of alarm, and heard that she must hasten to the palace — a mob was moving westward toward Versailles. She hurried through the rain; she did not look regretfully at each familiar corner of her small estate; she did not know that she would never see this place again.

Where was the King ? Someone had gone to bring him back from Meudon woods where he was hunting for the last time. Assemblymen assumed that they could make no definite decisions; could merely talk until the King returned. Mirabeau proclaimed: "I will, if necessary, denounce the Queen." "Her majesty ?" "The Queen, or anyone who may be guilty." Marie Antoinette knew that Mirabeau had defied the King. She heard that he had defied her, and she would not forget.

Helplessly among the helpless she sat waiting, watching for the King down that long eastward-stretching avenue through the wind-swept rain. The Flanders Regiment stood between the palace and the wet, empty road; the Flanders Regiment whose officers had sworn allegiance four nights ago. There must be hope; a mob assailed these gates without avail in Turgot's time. The King now galloped past the troops; they cheered him; he did not stop to answer them; he could not say the word they wished to hear. He did not look a King, wet, in his hunting clothes; but the soldiers did not yet dare to laugh.

Louis, dripping, muddy, entered the council room with Marie Antoinette. "Your majesty's orders ?" someone asked. "Against women ?" he retorted. "You must be jesting." Again the question frequently discussed and still unsettled: "Were it well to fly ?" Louis walked ponderously to and fro, dishevelled, like an exiled monarch in disguise, muttering: "A king in flight, a king in flight," and, while he hesitated the mob arrived. A group of women gained admission to his presence; his kindness quickly won them, and when they returned to their companions their gratitude was greeted as a

sign of treachery. "But," they protested "the King will give us bread. Did we not come to ask for it ?" The angry women seemed to guess that Louis this morning in the forest said: "If I had bread, I would distribute it." Perhaps they had heard that Marie Antoinette's disdainful wit suggested cake, not that her misplaced humor meant the poor cheap food the Austrians call cake. In any case, these women had not come for wit, not humor, nor for promises. They came for food or for revenge, or both. Still the King walked in his palace wondering: "Shall I go ?" Perhaps he would determine to depart; his carriages were ordered to drive up to the door, but scarcely had the horses left the stables when they were stopped and turned back by the mob. The King's friends offered him their coaches, and the Queen ordered her boxes to be packed again. Then, once more, the King resolved to wait, fearing bandits and assassins on the roads. The King dreaded the experiment which Henry III had tried two hundred years before, and had returned victorious. Marie Antoinette could only sigh and say: "I know the mob has come to murder me, but my mother taught me not to fear death, and I await it bravely."

Hesitation reigned while the fate of monarchy hung in the balance. Up and down the dimly lighted Galerie des Glaces the whispering court trailed its reflections in the mirrors, the ghosts of all the pageants of an hundred years, accompanied by the muffled mutterings of the mob, the weird burlesque of orchestrated, formal gaiety. The Queen was in her room with Madame and the King's sister. The darkened *salon de jeu,* nearby, where Marie Antoinette habitually presided at this hour over a gambling table flashing golden coins, was filled with listening, wondering, apprehensive ladies whose soft questioning voices had replaced the laughter which recently had sounded above exciting play. All Versailles waited, wondering, while night closed upon the indecision of the King,

as in the ancient legend, "Wotan still enthroned on high with shattered spear-shaft in his hand, sits shrinking, awestruck, a grave silent god." The Sun King's high-heeled tread haunted dim halls in sovereign sorrow on this fatal night. The sun had set forever on Versailles, for it would shine tomorrow on an empty palace. New troops and La Fayette himself arrived in vain, exhausted. "I chose to come," he said, "to die at your majesty's feet, instead of falling still more uselessly upon the Place de Grève" where he had implored his soldiers not to let the women march against their King. "What do the people want ?" asked helpless Louis; and again he heard: "They will have bread." "But I have signed decrees. They shall be fed." Creatures of the crowd outside began to question: "Why did we come ?" Yet others were still resolute, remembering definite purposes, and, moreover, tired out, unable to return tonight to Paris; too hungry, cold, and wet to think of anything but food and shelter in search of which they wandered grumblingly. Thus court and mob in their respective places wandered, wondered, finding no remedy in palace or in town, while fate deferred its action till the morrow, filling the air with this unnamed decree till gradually a calm crept over all in the profound obscurity of night. There was no sound of stragglers in moist outer darkness, and in the chateau the few remaining lights were all put out, the doors were closed, for La Fayette had said that all was well, thinking that he had placed his soldiers properly. He stumbled wearily to bed, the King retired to much needed rest, but Marie Antoinette was still awake, thinking of certain warnings. She had recognized that afternoon the valet of the duc d'Orléans, and wondered, shuddering, how and why he had appeared. She had heard strange whisperings that she would die at dawn. If this were destiny, there was no escape; she would not summon extra guards. She would attempt to sleep away the few remaining hours of this night or of her life. Fersen was at

Versailles — could he have given her the possibility of rest, of confidence ? Worn out, unwary, all the court had crept away to ill-defended rooms, and Versailles slumbered.

Three times that evening the marquis de Digoine had seen and called attention to an open gate that offered access to the park. He had been assured it would be locked, and he had gone away. Early in the morning the Queen, awakened by the sound of people passing underneath her windows, had been informed that cold complaining women had found no shelter all night long; whereupon she decided to rest a little longer. One hour more — armed men had found the door, the stairway, the rooms adjoining Marie Antoinette's. A wild shout of "Save the Queen !" while one brave man fought many, gave just the time for her to hurry into stockings, skirt, and cloak, to run through secret passageway, to cross the Œil de Bœuf, to knock — no answer — frenzied repeated rappings — "Save me, my friends !" cried Marie Antoinette to those who, roused at last, admitted her to the King's room. He had hurried along another way, had failed to find her, had dashed back again to meet her in his own apartment, while the mob drove pikes into her empty bed, while Mme de Tourzel conducted the Dauphin to the King. Hastening to her daughter, then calmly returning with her, the Queen joined the assembled royal family. Even in such a crisis there was slight delay while etiquette made up its ceremonious mind to grant La Fayette the *grand entrée*. He reassured the King, his soldiers promptly drove the mob out to the courtyard. He did not notice that this disgraceful set of scenes was partly due to his having failed to take all necessary precautions for the guarding of the gates. He had saved the lives of King and Queen, but by the narrowest margin.

Louis and his ministers met in futile council while the royal family waited, wondered as it did the night before. The Queen stood at the window looking out into the strange ironic

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brightness of the morning which seemed far darker than a rainy yesterday. With her were Mme Elizabeth, Mme Royale, and the Dauphin who complained of hunger. "Have patience," said his mother, wearily, thinking perhaps that this was Louis' answer to the mob which filled the courtyard there below. She tried to hide her tears from relatives and from the crowd; then dried her eyes to see the King upon the balcony where, in answer to the autocracy of the rabble, he was compelled to risk his life. But, by an unexpected impulse, the populace was moved to cry out *"Vive le Roi!"* The Queen, encouraged, noted next instant a changing tone that marked the shout: *"La Reine!"* She hesitated, then stepped out upon the balcony, for La Fayette had told her she must stand where the King stood. She held her son's hand and her daughter's. "No children!" shrieked the crowd. She waved them back, held her head high, rested her fingers on the gilded railing, awaiting death immovably, not seeing that a gun pointing up at her was struck down or lowered by a counter resolution. La Fayette had followed her, to kiss her steady slender hand. His homage called forth shouts of *"Vive la Reine!"* while he escorted her into the presence of the King who had obeyed the people.

And now the courtyard rings with a new command: "The King to Paris!" If he refuse to go will not all Paris come to drag him back? The Queen bewails the wasted opportunity to fly, for they are captured now, and there is no escape. La Fayette can offer no resistance to the people's will. In a sudden anguish of deep humiliation, Marie Antoinette, clutching her son tightly in her arms, pleads with the helpless King: "Promise me that if another chance presents itself you will fly before it is too late." Louis, weeping, answers not a word. Still the cry: "The King to Paris!" fills the courtyard while La Fayette asks: "What do you intend to do?" The Queen

replies: "I know what fate awaits me, but I shall have the courage to die at the King's feet, in my children's arms." The futile court argues distractedly, has no clear policy, no plan of action. Necker, in tears, still hears the cry: "The King to Paris!" while Marie Antoinette, in an agony of terror, imagines that she sees in the courtyard the duc d'Orléans, the embodiment of the evil spirit which led its cohorts here, showed them two hours ago the way up to her room and has now persuaded them to drive her to Paris and to death. The vision disappears; but the cry: "The King to Paris!" is no imaginary sound, and the mob that fills the courtyard is no fantasy. What says the Assembly? Nothing helpful; it could leave Versailles with no regret; it has not spent its life here in the palace, nor stored up memories of ancestry, of youth, of long association. The King and court still hesitate, but there is no hesitation, doubt, or argument in the mob which knows exactly what it wants and feels its power to enforce its will: "The King to Paris!" No one can offer Louis an alternative nor tell him how he may resist. At last, once more upon the balcony stands the King, no neatness and no splendor in his presence there where the Sun King had looked out, had seen no face that dared to frown at majesty. The present King says, meekly, that he agrees to go to Paris; the mob is for the moment satisfied, shouting with joy that mocks abasement, *"Vive le Roi!"*

The Sun King one day warned a careless courtier that it was dangerous to be almost late. The people now warn Louis XVI that they will not permit him to procrastinate. Only the scantiest preparations for the journey may be made; and royalty must hasten down the great staircase over spots of blood, for there has been no time to spread a carpet for the foot of monarchy. One coach must hold a King, a Queen, two children, their nurse, an uncle, and two aunts. At the door Marie Antoinette sees a faithful body-guard and gives

him cordial thanks. The Dauphin clasps his hands and cries: *"Grâce pour Maman,"* in terror at the crowd which at this moment has forgotten violence, but has no pity for the tears that she can scarcely keep from falling. The King, unchanged, escapes the revelation of despair which, none the less, he feels; his face expresses futile resignation. Stepping into the coach he says to M. de la Tour du Pin: "Remain here in command, and do what can be done to save my poor Versailles." The carriage must stand still for half an hour before its path can be made ready for retreat. At last it moves away, and a discharge of musketry by Versailles troops and mob combined, confers the doubtful tribute of its recognition. A hundred crawling vehicles drag unwilling emigrants to no new land of promise or of hope, as, thickly set in the encircling mob escorting this and other booty back to Paris, they travel inch by inch. The brandished heads of King's defenders stuck on pikes appear to indicate to royal heads that stick on royal shoulders still, how easily additional trophies could be won. The ungainly mass upon the road writhes slowly under bordering trees whose branches hold bright autmun leaves high in the quiet sunny air.

THE EMPTY palace left behind now echoes with the sound of servants' feet moving from room to room; the sound of closing shutters, windows, doors. With peculiar irony a better force of watchmen is on hand to guard deserted halls in the calm, coming night than was provided for the court the stormy night before. Versailles will sleep, until the day when for the first time it will be dedicated "to all the glories of France"; and its poor life will then consist of the drab crowds that will have wandered there through years much longer than the period of its pride. The Gallery of Mirrors, built to reflect a dazzling procession, will give back the empty stare of tourists herded through rooms that having lost a thousand

treasures offer wider spaciousness for vulgar curiosity as well as for the trained imaginative eye. The palace will retain a smaller store of what it once possessed, but the gardens will increase in beauty with each yearly growth while mossiness and decorative decay will soften statues once too white and glaring. Pools will float images of a tarnished, gilded palace and the more numerous yellow autumn leaves. And sometimes actors in elaborate costumes will try to mimic for an hour the manners for which the great enclosure was laid out as the scene, the stage whereon a certain comedy was performed uninterruptedly for an hundred years. Versailles will have gone its way from hunting-lodge to palace, then by slow decline, by means of Trianons, dairies, and quaint villages, down to collected memories of the sway of monumental, temporary monarchy, to pictures of three reigns that were regarded as the prelude to all the future history of France. The Sun King's house of gold, conquered by the people, will become a public promenade; the Trianon of Marie Antoinette a place where anyone may walk, and where there will appear to have been seen one day a ghost in a remembered garden sleeping in the sun; a ghost that has forgotten all the changes that long years have wrought; a ghost lost in a vision of gay phantoms whose life seems once again to have achieved its prime here in a protected circle in the centre of the wide fields of this new France which has attained a temporary happiness, a comparative content.

Book Two

L'AUTRICHIENNE

. . . a barren sceptre in my gripe
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding.

— SHAKESPEARE

CHAPTER VII

THE RISE OF PARIS

Base court where kings grow base,
To come at traitors' calls and do them grace.
— SHAKESPEARE

PARIS cheerfully awaited the arrival of this royal funeral procession, to smile at the mob of women, hoping that a puppet King and Queen would bring with them, however grudgingly, prosperity to an impoverished capital. Paris gave its children these new toys to play with, then to break. "We bring the baker, his wife, and the little baker boy," shouted the exultant and illusioned crowd, behind which followed wagon-loads of grain and flour accompanied by an occasional loaf of bread on pike. The mob, like Marie Antoinette, made errors of personal estimate. These creatures were convinced that monarchy had made bread scarce, could make it plentiful. She thought that only special enemies of hers had brought these ruffians to Versailles, many of them drunk, some riding cannons, others firing shots in air to startle her, or howling curses close to the carriage window. Calmly and graciously she said to those nearby: "The King has always wished his people to be happy. Our enemies who say wicked things about us are your enemies as well. We love the French." Women looked kindly at the Queen, and one replied: "We've been deceived; we did not know you."

The coach moved smoothly at so slow a pace; the Dauphin again complained of hunger, then tried to be resigned, seeing his mother's tears which did not hide from her the Flanders Regiment, five days ago so loyal, now bright with national

colors, loudly shouting: *"Vive la Nation !"*; nor the Orléans family on a Passy balcony watching complacently the Queen's humiliation. She was almost exhausted; she had been awake since five o'clock that morning with but two hours' sleep between the ending of her reign at Versailles and the beginning of a crowned captivity. Yet she was not allowed to go directly to the Tuileries to rest, but forced to attend a reception at the Hôtel de Ville. Night had fallen when she reached the city. Bailly spoke words of greeting which the King was too sad, too weary to pronounce from an improvised throne. Applause increased when Marie Antoinette reminded the mayor he had forgotten the essential point of the King's message: "I come with confidence to live here with my subjects." On a balcony in ghastly torchlight, like curious creatures caught for scrutiny, King and Queen appeared and heard the populace below shout: "Long live the King and Queen, the Dauphin and the nation !" Why did not royalty rejoice, make much of this, the seemingly united kingdom ? It was too late; the King was tired, hungry; the Queen irritated, weary, sad. They would look for lodgings now, and think of France tomorrow.

"How ugly it is !" exclaimed the Dauphin, entering the palace of the Louvre, devoid of royalty for more than an hundred years. "My son," replied his mother, deriving a moral lesson from inaccurately stated history, "Louis XIV enjoyed living here, and we must not be more particular than he." It was his fault that huts and stragglers, neglect and rubbish had defiled the great enclosure.

The King, eating heartily, seemed in good spirits. The Queen depressed, forlorn, addressed an apology to her ladies: "You know I did not expect to spend this night here." The only beds available were cots for the children, a few of better size and quality for their elders, but the majority slept on benches or on tables. Mme de Tourzel sat all night by the Dauphin's cot, having barricaded doors unguarded and un-

lockable as best she could with what there was of furniture.

Next morning Mme Elizabeth, drinking her coffee by an open window, was asked by the crowd how the King passed the night. "Very well, my children." "May we see him ?" "I will bring him here." In a quarter of an hour she returned with him, apologizing for the Queen's not being dressed, and promising that all the royal family would presently appear. The people of Paris were favorably disposed, the city cheered its captives heartily. The Queen spoke graciously, shook the hands of market-women, soldiers, anyone. When someone accused her of having wished to bombard Paris she denied the charge. Again when words were spoken to her in German she said that she had long forgotten that language, and the crowd again applauded; promised there should be no more bloodshed when she said the King would stay only in a tranquil capital. She took ribbons, flowers from her hat to give the people who asked for souvenirs, who cried: "Long live our good Queen !"

Nothing could be clearer than that she must mingle with her subjects, for, when she did, they praised her. But she was conscious of humiliation, of the forces that brought her here where once she wished to live yet could not persuade the King to come. She was irresistibly inclined to shut herself from court and crowd; she could not for the moment, speak to members of the diplomatic corps. It was not that she did not wish advances to be made to her, nor that Paris did not make them various: academic, popular. A letter begged her: "Be our first citizeness, think and say and prove it. The Queen will be adored if she will forget the wrongs that she has suffered." There were many to forget. And yet a politic scheme of general pardon might have induced, in time, more cordial feelings to take the place of tolerance. The patronizing tone of Paris was intolerable to her. Frenchmen had no

right to tell her what she must do to gain their love. Their suggestions were a denial of all sense of duty, of all due respect. She would have obedience and honor first and always, unconditionally. But, since obedience and honor cannot be paid by subjects who hold their rulers captive, they should have allowed their prisoners to go free and by this becoming turn of flattery won their King and Queen.

She still retained her sterile policy of passivity. "I hope our sane and honest subjects will return to us," she wrote, "though they are not in the majority. By untiring gentleness and patience we must try to conquer the spirit of suspicion and distrust by which our people have been torn from us . . . My present rôle is to shut myself in strictest privacy, to be forgotten except as one who has been and again shall be courageous when occasion may require. I must have no marked influence in choice of ministers or in other state affairs. It must be that our subjects will cherish us once more when they become acquainted with our thoughts, for we shall prove to them, as soon as they begin to show a favorable attitude, that we still wish for them a wise, fair liberty which it has always been the King's wish to establish. I crave nothing but a state of order which shall make this unhappy nation calm, and prepare for our son a more successful reign than ours. As for ourselves, we have lived through too many scenes of blood and horror; there can be no lasting happiness for the King and me." She did not know that revolutions do not drift; she learned too late that they cannot always be controlled.

She was tactless in regard to little things that were important. When one day a National Guardsman offered to arrange for her a concert by a military band, she answered: "I am astonished that you should make such a proposition to me at the present time." When the King was greeted in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine and someone congratulated Marie Antoinette, she irritably complained: "The people's conduct dif-

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PORTRAIT BY DROUAIS
ABOUT 1775

fers when the people visit us." She had forgotten their good behavior that first morning in the Tuileries gardens. Such lapses clouded the happier impressions which she sometimes made, and which she did not follow up effectively. When, some time later, investigations relative to the women's Versailles march included a questioning of her majesty, she answered cleverly: "I shall never bring charges against the King's subjects. I have seen, known, and forgotten all." Yet in her mind she bitterly resented the really trivial circumstance that Orléans and Mirabeau had been relieved of blame for that disturbance.

Calculations for the benefit of royalty played no part in court life at the Tuileries. Furniture arrived from Versailles, and the court spread itself in its accustomed circles, not in accordance with Parisian states of things. Functionaries, servants in reduced numbers but still plentiful, copied the past. The Queen, gambling moderately twice a week, wasted more time than money, yet in this particular activity, she was less reckless than many of her subjects. Barnave lost thirty thousand livres one night, and many rich men became paupers. The King discussed his affairs with friends, but to no good effect. Mme de Lamballe arrived, gave receptions to amuse the Queen who occasionally attended them, but held herself habitually at a distance, uninterested in entertainments which a scanty liberty allowed. She dined ordinarily in the company of the family with the addition of Monsieur and Madame who drove across the river from the palace of the Luxembourg to which they returned at an early hour. Of friends at hand the Queen had mainly Fersen who came to Paris as she did on October 6, and who, after some weeks, settled in his house in the rue Matignon near the Tuileries. "I do all I can to comfort her," he wrote; but, as will be seen, he gave her principally unwise advice. She had a library, but, as before, her books were usually left standing on their shelves. Her

chief diversions were her sewing and frequent games of billiards with the King, but more especially instruction and amusement of her children with whom on bright mornings she walked in the gardens not open to the public until noon.

The Dauphin played with the small son of the comte de Paroy in the grounds along the quai where he had rabbits, birds, a duck-pond and a garden in which he picked flowers for Marie Antoinette. His ingenuity devised attentions which afforded her a momentary pleasure, but when one day he heard someone referred to as being "happy as a queen," he said: "You do not mean my mother, for she cries so often." He loved to go with her to visit the Paris Foundling Hospital, bringing his small savings for its inmates. He played games with other children whom his mother invited to tea-parties for his sister in Mme de Tourzel's rooms, and he listened every Sunday to Mme Royale's lessons in the catechism. He promised his mother to learn to read by New Year's Day, and to make progress in his various studies one of which he very much disliked. "If you knew," he answered her occasional remonstrance, "how boring grammar is." The comte de Paroy helped Marie Antoinette devise agreeable methods of instruction such as a magic lantern for illustrated lessons in geography. But no one could solve her greater problems for her.

There were loud greetings for her at the opera now and then. Mme Dugazon sang one day, directly at the royal box, with hearty approbation of the audience: *"Ah! comme j'aime ma maîtresse!"* Yet demonstrations of this sort incited her enemies to action, and she feared that their revenge would counterbalance the enthusiasm of her friends. She did not now exaggerate the significance of acclaim as she had done. Moreover, she heard of vigorous applause called forth by Chénier's anti-royal *Charles IX,* and she resolved to go but rarely to the theatre, though La Fayette advised her to appear

in public frequently; and Paris thought she sulked behind the palace doors, or plotted a revenge. *Rome* and *Austria* were suggested as nicknames for the Tuileries where priests and foreigners were believed to have her ready ear. She still thought Mercy a far wiser man than La Fayette, and Mercy approved her resolution to wait behind the scenes. She did not go with Louis when he walked to the Champ de Mars for a review, and Paris implied criticism of her by passing a favorable verdict on the King: "His feet, like ours, are muddy." Three days later riots broke out again and Marie Antoinette concluded that no good could come of walking inanely up and down the streets of a disgruntled capital.

She had not long been settled in the Tuileries when someone brought her welcome, ill-conceived advice. "Go with your children to the Emperor. You can accomplish nothing here." Yet if she could escape, the King might be forced, as had been often advocated, to divorce her. She would not try to go without her husband. No doubt the Emperor would find some way of helping her, of rescuing his sister from this semi-prison where loyal body-guards had been replaced by National Guardsmen; from this country in which it was decreed that church property was at the disposal of the state. She vastly preferred salvation at the hands of relatives than to be forced to deal with upstarts, to compromise with demagogues.

In a few months she was informed that the Emperor, her best friend, was dead. But there were other foreigners to whom she might appeal. Burke wrote his flowery praise of her across the channel; but it seemed best to put one's trust in Leopold II, successor to Joseph, though she scarcely knew this younger brother, had not seen him since she left Vienna when he was a child. He wrote to her affectionately now, and she was touched. She wondered what he could do for her, neglected to wonder how she might work in France for her

immediate benefit, as, for example, by making known the late Emperor's death-bed statement: "I have never received one *sou* from France"; by constantly attempting to placate the people. If no one believed her she could make still greater efforts.

It seemed to her, on the other hand, that arguments arranged themselves in solid ranks on every side; that new events embroiled her more and more deeply in French antagonism. Here, brought before her, were the son and widow of the marquis de Favras, hanged for plotting the escape of Louis XVI. "One can but die," exclaimed the distracted Queen, "when one is attacked by those whose crimes are only equalled by their talents, and defended by good men lacking judgment who compromise me by publicly escorting Favras' family into my presence. If I were free, I should place between the King and me at the table the son of the man who died for us; but here, surrounded by the murderers of the father, I dared not let my eyes rest on the boy. The royalists will criticize my manner, the revolutionists will seek revenge on those who sought to please me by this introduction." Naturally, in secret, she did what she could for the Favras, regretting her inability to do more.

When the King went to the Assembly to countenance the makers of the constitution, she was not really cheered by loud acclaim in the Salle de Manège that flanked the gardens of the Tuileries; nor by the shout of Barnave: "Ah ! What a good King ! He should have a throne of gold and diamonds !"; nor by the deputies who, as formerly at Versailles, escorted Louis back to the palace, meeting on the way the Queen and children, hearing and loudly praising these words of Marie Antoinette: "I agree with what the King has said, and I am bringing up his son to share his views and virtues." She regarded all adulation as ephemeral, and her depression deepened.

One day the shouts of *"Vive la Reine!"* accompanied her majesty on the way to church; the Dauphin clapped his hands, but his mother was convinced that only a child could think the people still loved monarchy. The King felt that Necker had forced him into a false position of open-mindness toward the constitution, and he was wondering how he might re-establish his integrity. "Ah!" exclaimed Mme Elizabeth, "if only the King would be the King, how everything would change!" Her brother was still sure that to be a sovereign were good, did it not involve cruelty to his people. As for animals, his compassion had its lapses. Walking one day in the Tuileries gardens, he struck a dog so hard a blow it died before its mistress' eyes. It had run toward his majesty in barking and tail-wagging state of canine friendliness; but the King seemed pleased with his deft stroke, as he laughed and strolled away in foolish and complacent inconsistency, neglecting to observe that human beasts were growing over-confident, threatening to go mad; but even if they did he would not shoot them down.

The year that buried the old France had gone, and the new year had not evolved a plan to resurrect it. The royal family waited as patiently as might be for early summer and what country life the unfinished constitution would permit the King. The spring was largely occupied with preparations for the confirmation of Mme Royale — a pious task too closely akin to resignation. It tended to increase the fatal steadfastness of Louis to ancient forms of Catholic ordinance by linking new associations to the remembered beauty of old services, by strengthening the comfort of a faith not eminently useful in worldly tasks of wit and will. Could one expect him to renounce his faith? By no means. Note, however, that a faith, a scruple, a weakness, a little strength, something wise or foolish, good or bad, compromises, half-measures, double-dealings, faulty judgments — whatever it might be, something

always barred the way to action. Mme Royale knelt in the palace to receive the blessings of her parents. The King's tears and hands were on her head, his words of Christian guidance in her ears. The princess entered Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois; the Queen incognita in black dress sought gloomy consolation in the cold nave of the old church. She was a lonely witness of a scene that would have been all brilliance at Versailles, where etiquette would have sanctioned a diamond necklace for the Daughter of France, and, for the Queen, elaborate celebrations.

To get away from Paris, from the immediate perils of fresh rioting, of a mob that one day chanced to change its resolution, did not storm the Tuileries; to doubt that good subjects would never dominate the city — these were the preoccupations of Marie Antoinette. The family, moreover, needed a change of air and scene, and it seemed wise to go, now that old scandals were being brought again to light, and a new tale of money paid by Marie Antoinette to writers of libels against deputies in the Assembly. The *Red Book,* full of authoritative details of the cost of the court of frivolity, was accepted as proof positive of extravagance which had long been taken for granted.

Generous but patronizing, the Assembly let its victims journey to Saint-Cloud in early June. The family made itself as comfortable as possible, but nothing was in readiness. The Queen thought of La Muette, nearby, the place in which her first son died a year ago; and she congratulated herself that the present very healthy Dauphin would grow stronger still in these wide sunny gardens. He was much safer here than at the Tuileries. His mother was at liberty to walk and drive with him and Mme Royale, though National Guardsmen kept their prisoners in view. One day she drove with him to Bellevue; he played outside the chateau with another boy and with a soldier, while Marie Antoinette wept over a young

girl whose sympathy brought back lost yesterdays and all their contrast to the present time.

At Saint-Cloud there were evening gatherings, as at the Tuileries; Monsieur, Madame, and Mme Elizabeth were guests at supper, followed by billiard games for King and Queen. One afternoon her majesty heard a sound below her window, stepped out upon the balcony, saw fifty friends — priests, women, *chevaliers* of Saint-Louis — who had come to offer comforting but useless sympathy to which she responded with tears in which they joined. Walking one day with Mme de Tarente, she talked of her father and mother, of his prophetic last farewell, of her incessant warnings.

She knew that rumors had been whispered that she and Louis had not been taking little horseback rides for exercise alone, but in preparation for a long journey. One day, in fact, the King's men followed him far beyond Saint-Cloud through Vésinet forest, to the neighborhood of Maisons, while the Queen, the children, Mme Elizabeth were driving northward. Those who accompanied the King were sure that he intended to reach Chantilly or Compiègne where Condé's soldiers must be ready, waiting. Suddenly the King reined in his horse, turned, started south again. The Queen's carriage swept in a great circle toward Saint-Cloud, where monarchy could still sleep peacefully.

July had come, and with it a great event which, like many others, might, if properly employed, have spelt salvation more gratifying than mere flight. The King and Queen had gone to Paris to spend days that were to culminate in a Feast of Federation, fête of a united France to celebrate the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille the site of which was now a smooth space "where one dances." New law and order hoped for and planned, not yet achieved, filled the French mind with dreams of love, fraternity, equality — fantastic dreams more stirring than the dull reality of government; dreams that inspired cer-

tain noblemen to assist the commoners to build an altar that should tower above three hundred thousand patriots on the Champ de Mars. The King dared not refuse to be a priest in this wide open temple of the new national faith. He and his wife were dazed, incredulous, helpless, wondering what this force could be that gathered all these subjects from the most distant corners of the realm. Some of them walked weary dusty miles, arrived too late, but happy to have come, to have seen Paris and its prisoners. Only a mad inconsistency could cheer, alike, King, Queen, Equality, and France. The Federation was a foolish costume farce which the King and Queen despised. They thought in terms of Petit-Trianon theatre, more real to them than the huge stadium on the Champ de Mars. They consented to be gracious, to greet even the hated duc d'Orléans (returning in futility from English sojourn) though there could be no cordiality in the response of jealous duke to monarchy, of jealous monarchy to duke. And, when, months later, Orléans went to thank the King and Queen for certain favors granted him, the misplaced ardor of the royalists insulted and turned him once again and finally into an enemy of Louis and Marie Antoinette. Those insults displeased their majesties who, none the less, neglected to explain the error to the duke.

"I cannot think of the coming celebration without shuddering. It will be most painful, yet we must be present," whispered Marie Antoinette who stood on July 12 with Louis at the foot of the palace stairway reviewing the procession of the federates. She noticed a uniform and pulled its wearer's sleeve: "Whence do you come ?" "The country over which your ancestors have reigned: your faithful Lorraine." She turned to the King: "You hear ? *Your* faithful Lorraine." Several persons noted with pleasure her tactful emphasis; but it was a minor triumph soon forgotten.

"The sky's aristocratic," said a wit on July 14 when the

Champ de Mars displayed thousands of umbrellas variously colored, encircling the altar at which three hundred priests officiated. The Queen could not completely hide her irritation when she found she was not to stand beside the King, but with her children at the windows of the École Militaire. Instinct, however, wisely prompted her to hold the Dauphin, wrapped in a shawl, in sight of the applauding crowd; and when the King swore loudly that he would obey the constitution (still unfinished and therefore in part unknown to him) she raised her son in her hands, and said: "We share all the King's convictions." There were shouts of approbation; and general rejoicings filled succeeding days in Paris full of delegates who made much of monarchy, requesting that it dine in public for convenient observation. One day the Dauphin amused himself pulling leaves off vines that grew upon a balcony beneath which federates passing asked for souvenirs; and he rained down leaves which these men kept. They came to see him playing in his garden every afternoon. "Come, visit us; your name is ours," said representatives of Normandy; and others issued urgent invitations. The King, aware that his son had made an excellent impression, was convinced the provinces loved royalty, that only Paris harbored anarchists opposed to greetings given to the crown, to the warm sympathy excited by the Dauphin. Paris, at any rate, did not love royalty the more because the provinces applauded it.

The Queen wrote down her thoughts: "The ceremony of the Federation passed off peacefully. We can only hope that public opinion will grow steadily in our favor, for, otherwise, our unaided efforts will merely kindle flames to burn ourselves" — a germ of wisdom destined to short life, to that very quality of imperfection in which she sensed a menace. Still the mainly federal fervor flourished. On July 18 at the Porte de Chaillot the King again reviewed the National Guards; the Queen and children in an open carriage were the centre of as-

sembled federates to whom she talked and gave her hand on which three hundred kisses were bestowed.

Back to Saint-Cloud where those fingers had received in secret the tribute of a great man's homage, the signature of a contract intended to be binding. "Never," Marie Antoinette had said in the course of much discussion, "will we be so desperate, I trust, as to seek the help of Mirabeau." But it was difficult to know whom to trust. Mirabeau had no faith in Necker nor in La Fayette on whom the Queen had frequently been advised to lean; and he had said: "The King has only one man near him: Marie Antoinette. France and the monarchy can be saved only if the King and Queen leave Paris. I think she would not wish for life without her crown, but she will lose the former if she cannot keep the latter." The erstwhile courtier, the comte de La Marck, had spoken in favor of Mirabeau whom Fersen had also recommended to the Queen. At last she had resolved to try a distasteful experiment though she dreaded him whose life, as she had heard of it in other years, presented only vulgar crudities; she described him as a monster who had planned her death, who had been with Orléans, the principal instigator of the women who conquered Versailles.

On July 3 she stood majestically, the image of deserted grandeur making him instantly her champion as he came into her presence at Saint-Cloud. She was surprised to find that she could not escape the thick sense of his genius, of his gallantry, and she had thus expressed herself: "If I were addressing an ordinary enemy who had sworn the ruin of the monarchy, I should be acting unworthily, but since I am speaking to a Mirabeau . . ." He accused himself of having caused her trouble, and as her kindness seemed to pardon him, her approbation seemed to grow till finally he said: "Your august mother never dismissed a subject from her presence without giving him her hand to kiss." The Queen extended hers;

and, when he rose, his eloquence inspired her with hope: "Madame, the monarchy is saved!" She felt that heretofore she had misjudged this man; and he went back to Paris saying: "She is very great, very noble, very unhappy, but I will rescue her." And when, before long, that woman Mme de La Motte appeared again in Paris dragging new calumnies into light: "I will snatch the unfortunate Queen from her executioners, or perish," roared his resolution: and La Motte retreated hastily, while he dreamed of placing fallen majesty again upon a steady throne.

His vision of her and hers of him was quickly dimmed, however, for she soon heard of speeches full of apparent treachery, which he made in the Assembly, and these more markedly impressed her than his frequent utterances there in favor of the prerogatives of the King whose power the new constitution threatened to nullify. And he soon found that she withheld from him the greater portion of her confidence. She could not see that he must maintain his popularity, continue to keep the revolution in his control in order that he might lead the nation into wisdom. But she had learned that she herself must frequently dissimulate; and she was to call her foreign friends to strict account for having failed to understand the absolute necessity of her double game. She ignored Mirabeau's parallel predicament, for she had too slim a faith in him, and was repulsed by his having counselled civil war "to the horrors of which," she still insisted, "all else is preferable." The royal family was divided on this point: "I regard civil war as necessary," said Mme Elizabeth. "Were I the King I would resort to it, but, thank God, I'm not."

The Queen sent Mirabeau's advice to Mercy: "The paper I enclose seems to me so extraordinary in style and character that I wish you to read it before I discuss it with you. Frankly, I call it insane from beginning to end. How can Mirabeau or any other thinking person feel at any time, but most partic-

ularly now, that civil war could be of any use to us ?" Yet some months before, Mercy had written in favor of such action; and Marie Antoinette had always wished to see Louis actually reign. Why not go now, as Mirabeau suggested, openly and loyally attended to some town not far away; summon a formidable army there; return to conquer all opposition ? She had for months had faith in flight, and this idea should have been specially acceptable, for it combined departure with a triumphal reappearance. Mirabeau beckoned frantically, pointing out to her the doors that were closing before her eyes in every corridor of escape, the locks to which she knew she had no key. But she was paralyzed by distrust of him, and by her belief that foreigners could break down these doors which, in the meantime, seemed to her a strong protection against France.

Conferences filled succeeding months, wasting the days, while the monarchical zeal of federates gave place to the rising animosity of Paris. Necker, having lost a portion of the national favor as well as all the confidence of the King, departed once again. Marie Antoinette was told that if she did not leave the country, murder, or, at least divorce (which La Fayette informed her would be based on alleged adultery) would separate her from the King. The former threat was nearly carried out by an assassin's knife in Saint-Cloud gardens one day when the rain prevented her from walking in the park. But not all the hatred was directed at the Queen, for someone had maliciously whispered in Louis' ear that Henri III was stabbed here at Saint-Cloud.

The menace of individuals was, however, a far less perplexing problem than the general unrest. The Queen had heard of riots caused in Paris by the news that Bouillé had massacred disobedient soldiers near the eastern border; and she was informed that the army and the navy were drifting, in spite of all that officers could do, toward a complete dis-

STEPHENS COLLEG
COLUMBIA, MO.

PORTRAIT OF MARIE ANTOINETTE BY JANINET
ABOUT 1777

organization; that magistrates of the old order were retiring from their positions in despair; that Knights of the Order of Saint-Louis, discovered in the Tuileries, deepened the distrust that Paris felt in view of the great palace; that La Fayette had given the weapons of these royalists to National Guardsmen whose loyalty she doubted. Yet when the King was ill, certain persons who had shown no interest in his health, joined with the faithful in anxiety on his account; and when they knew of his recovery they made the illumined streets of Paris gay. Yet, she felt, this momentary favor could not balance all the instances of opposition. And when there were so many differences of opinion she thought it foolish to trust the advice of one man. Moreover that advice was complex, difficult. Mirabeau counselled Marie Antoinette to cultivate Barnave, a man who seemed opposed to monarchy, but to see him only in strict privacy. She was not to let him know about the other men whom in various ways and with elaborate caution Mirabeau urged her to sound, while gradually building up the sum of the adherents to her cause. She finally arrived at the gratuitous conclusion that "Mirabeau's principles are always bad"; that she had better try to make him think that she still trusted him, thereby to prolong his faithfulness, but to watch for a chance to ruin him, or see him sink into deserved obscurity.

What had been her attitude during negotiations with the comte de la Marck, Mirabeau's intermediary? She readily grasped ideas that he presented, she had an evident desire to please her interlocutor who did not doubt the goodness of her heart, however much beside the point of politics this quality might be. Serious and sad when talking of the revolution, she always longed to turn the conversation into lighter vein, to pick out persons to be mocked and laughted at. Knowing the tremendous dangers that surrounded her, she managed none the less to lead La Marck away from vital questions to

reminiscences of Versailles days, court gossip; to ask him if he remembered an hour of hilarity at a certain courtier's expense, the ludicrous appearance of a certain duchess one night many years ago. She laughed, not noticing La Marck's abstraction. Straining to recapture lost frivolity she lost an opportunity to work for its eventual restoration. La Marck could please her with a sympathetic smile while he despaired of saving her, realizing that Mirabeau had indeed misjudged her; that she had not the perseverance which her dignity and courage had seemed to promise; and that Mirabeau's expectations had been gratified in only one particular: her readiness to grant him a generous allowance over and above the payment of his numerous debts.

It may have occurred to Marie Antoinette that she had amply rewarded Mirabeau, paid him for all services for which, if she should cease to need them, she might feel no deeper obligation. How, indeed, had Mirabeau been spending money ? Still for pleasure which his purse but not his health could now afford. She felt justified by her difficulties for pretending to give him her full confidence when she reserved the greater part of it for others. She had no comprehension of the breadth of Mirabeau's understanding of finance, the importance of his knowledge that in such a crisis as the state was facing, money and politics must work together, a point that Necker failed to see. Her own need for money Mirabeau demonstrated to Marie Antoinette, suggested that she employ as much of it as possible to spread libels against her enemies just as they did against her. Mirabeau conferred with her and she with others as to the collection of large funds. She was told it would be dangerous or impossible to obtain an adequate loan in France, unless, under the pretext that the legislature required it, the departments might be duped. She offered to sell her jewels (those of the crown were in the possession of the Assembly) but Mercy advised her to keep them

for emergency. As to foreign markets, there were references to some two million francs deposited for the Queen by Laborde in England; and Walpole wrote: "If money could serve her, one hundred thousand pounds would have been subscribed in a quarter of an hour at Lloyd's coffee-house." Her brother the Emperor of Austria was not as generous as she had hoped; she could not understand why he could not spare the fortune she required. Fersen provided all he could, and others offered contributions; but one can scarcely bribe a nation into either peace or war when one is on the verge of bankruptcy.

Mirabeau began to think the populace would trample upon royal bodies "if they cannot make some sort of supreme effort." He found to his dismay that royal ears were open to the strangest sounds, to whisperings of "mesmeric, idiotic Bergasse," to the vituperations of Breteuil whom Marie Antoinette was still inclined, in spite of her experience, to trust. Mirabeau still fought but could not save himself, much less the monarchy. He could help aged aunts to emigrate as secretly as possible, knowing however, that France would know, would think their niece and nephew meant to follow suit. Mirabeau was dying while the King and Queen sat wondering what to do; and when he died his heroine smiled. "Do not rejoice," her husband warned. "His death has cost us more than you imagine."

Just what was that loss ? It may be that longer life, even with a co-operating King and Queen, could not have given Mirabeau success. He might have gone the way of Danton and of Robespierre. Even Napoleon might have died upon the scaffold had he ruled too soon. At any rate, Louis and Marie Antoinette, now that Mirabeau was dead, opened their minds still more to errors which even he had not been able to prevent. They had not given him a fair trial; and above all they had not grasped the fact that it was the nation, not a mere

handful of disturbers of the peace, which stood between them and the throne; that only by some great effort could there be any hope of persuading all those subjects to acknowledge them. This had ever been the burden of the great man's message, based upon the double strength of force and argument. The King would not use force, the Queen would not consent to justify herself by patient, persistent word and deed. Yet even a mistaken policy might in some degree have been a means of profit if adopted definitely and practised steadily. But constant shifting, hesitation, successive half-measures and double dealings were certain to precipitate a final fall.

The King desired to induce the *émigrés* to return at once, to work in harmony with him. But this was the last thing they wished to do. They had miserably fled in fear or in disgust or to avoid paying debts by taking with them all the money that they could collect. Some went because they wished to travel, some because it had become the fashion, but whatever motive moved them they met across the border in scattered groups to live as nearly as possible the life that they had always lived. To their habitual extravagance, their arrogance, quarrels, and petty jealousies, they added mockery of the provincial manners and appearance of the foreigners who sheltered them and who were amazed to see one Frenchman refuse to help another in greater need than he. The *émigrés* accepted the offered kindness which they scorned, and regarded hospitable Europeans as even less considerable than ordinary Frenchmen.

They were planning a violent revenge on France and on the Queen whom they regarded as traitress to their cause. "What can Marie Antoinette have done that they should so delight in tearing her to pieces publicly ?" wondered her sister Marie Christine, who was in Brussels at the time. Condé and Artois, cursing each delay, were frantically collecting forces to march against the revolution. Condé, a good soldier, was more

dangerous than Artois, and his hatred of Marie Antoinette was deeper, for it was based upon the cardinal's disgrace; and he was surrounded by a host of Rohans no less eager for the downfall of the Queen than he. Artois' friend Vaudreuil advised caution and no action without the full co-operation of the King; yet he had exclaimed as if detecting treachery: "What a shameful misfortune is this recognition of the constitution by the King!" Artois was still more emphatic. Monsieur, in Paris, found no fault in his distant brother, and had no active sympathy for the one at hand, against whom some thought he plotted direct usurpation, others that he was trying to persuade the King to let him wear the crown. More probably he was awaiting a more favorable opportunity than he had found for personal gain.

The *émigrés* had not always met with the approval upon which they counted. Soon after Louis and Marie Antoinette had settled in the Tuileries, Joseph II wrote (and, later, Leopold II sent the same advice) to Artois: "If you love the King, the Queen, and France's welfare, cease this so-called 'aristocratic' agitation and opposition." The *émigrés* with imprecations made, in effect, the following answer: "What else but to save royalty from revolution are we attempting? What can be gained by hesitating, losing time, compromising themselves on all sides yet adopting no vigorous and determined course, as King and Queen are doing? We shall be obliged to try the desperate remedy of taking them away with us by force."

But if the *émigrés* had captured the prisoners of the palace, they would have locked them in deeper dungeons, for high in the councils of the *émigrés* was Calonne, the bitterest enemy of the Queen. He informed Leopold that Marie Antoinette had given her complete confidence to La Fayette. The aristocracy was unaware of or quite indifferent to the fact that when he left Versailles, Louis sent a message to the King

of Spain to prove that he regarded all his present actions as enforced and therefore null and void. The *émigrés,* however, would never credit Louis with intrinsic honesty.

Hearing of many of Calonne's lies, the Queen wrote Mercy: "My brother and I are prevented by our lineage from suspecting one another of baseness; but there are times when one must dissimulate, and I cannot now be frank, outspoken, as it is natural for me to be. Whatever I do is for the glory of the King and of his son. Who else deserves my help ?" She referred to those outside the family, yet even Mme Elizabeth had recently annoyed her by insisting on the good intentions of the *émigrés.* The King's sister did not name Marie Antoinette's Austrian origin as the source of her distrust, but she suspected something of the sort, and she was convinced that Monsieur and Artois were their brother's friends. The Queen grew desperate as the conduct of the *émigrés* pursued its inconsiderate course, and she informed her brother: "The King has written Artois that if he and the other princes persist in their designs, he will be obliged to openly denounce them, and to call all faithful subjects to gather round him." The nation had already learned to look upon the exiles as their bitterest enemies, to associate them with foreign hatred of French rights and French authority. But France by no means dissociated the King from such disloyalty, and it had been well for Louis could he have made this cleavage clear.

Led by the Queen he drifted toward the resort to foreign aid, a fatal blunder which shut him off from every chance of winning France. The foreign question was complex, and it involved the King and Queen in a variety of related problems, and the difficulty of maintaining secrecy when closely watched. Marie Antoinette had written her brother: "Beware of the Free-Masons ! It is by their help that all our monsters hope the goal at which they have arrived in France, will, in all countries be reached by their foreign cohorts." There was a

degree of truth in the alleged activity of secret societies; some evidence that Louis XVI was condemned by the Free-Masons five years before the revolution broke out, and yet, no doubt, this agency had sworn the deaths of other monarchs whom they could not harm. The sources of trouble were innumerable. A certain Jew named Ephraim worked with the baron de Goltz in Prussian campaign against the Queen of France: a charge which Goltz denied; and there was a vast network of secret plots; and vagabonds and cut-throats always ready to be bribed and men with money bribing them; and bands of more or less organized upstarts inclined by nature, by misfortune, or by the excitement of destruction to take their parts in the more serious work of calculating agitators whose eloquence repeatedly inflamed them. The point that Marie Antoinette failed to see was that these manifestations were essentially correlatives of deeper and more vital forces. She could not understand that if the monarchy could manage to appeal to France itself, the power of these minor insurrectionists would be reduced to insignificance; and that by calling to foreigners for help, the possibility of building up that public opinion which should favor royalty would inevitably be forestalled.

That any operations of royalists in her realm could be successful, Fersen denied; and Fersen's opinion had the weight of absolute devotion to Marie Antoinette. He ciphered and deciphered letters to and from the King's and Queen's foreign correspondents, and he, like the *émigrés,* disapproved of the acceptance of the constitution by the monarchy. And still his clear loyalty caused no scandal, though Gouverneur Morris wrote: "His merit consists in being the Queen's lover; he has the air of a man exhausted."

One day she found this warning in her napkin: "Your head will answer for the first shot fired by the Emperor." She had not yet requested that a shot be fired. Her enemies, how-

ever, had neither knowledge nor interest in the varying and conditional details of her plans. "We will ask no foreign power to send troops into this country, unless in desperate circumstances," she had written. But, if circumstances became desperate, she was sure that foreign troops could save her family, for she believed the French could be intimidated, misjudging them just as the Stuarts misjudged the English. For the present her idea was that a threat might do much good, perhaps forestall a future need for use of arms. "Prussia and Austria should stand together as guarantors of treaties France has signed; and they should register their disapproval of the manner in which the revolution humiliates the King of France. They must not send their armies into France nor try to stir up counter-revolution." Here was the germ of the idea of an Armed Congress, which grew in long succeeding months. But, for the moment, the scheme was set aside, on account of other plans, particularly the elaborate preparations for a possible flight of King and family to a town in France where the working out of details relative to the Armed Congress was to be resumed.

Even if the Emperor were now requested to advance his armies, he would have hesitated. "No sovereign," he wrote, "should oppose a form of government which his subjects have demanded." Nevertheless he never acted according to this principle, and he was, in fact, just then engaged in the attempt to dominate his people who were dissatisfied with the reforms which the preceding ruler of Austria had achieved. The present emperor was following Catherine the Great's advice to Marie Antoinette: "Kings should not be moved by a protesting populace, but, like the moon, serenely sail the heavens indifferent to barking dogs." Yet here the genius of the statesman was in conflict with the sovereign's utterance, for Catherine threw bones to dogs to keep them quiet, or ordered that they be whipped, or sometimes seemed to stop

their noise by mere indifference, as if the manna which she dropped from an imperial throne had fallen quite by accident.

Vermond long ago told Marie Antoinette that foreign queens in France had had their difficulties. If she thought now of Marie de Medici or Anne of Austria, she would have said that she could find no Richelieu or Mazarin. More probably she could not have recognized them. And her problems might have puzzled them as well as later statesmen. As for the appeal to foreign aid, she may not have known that Coligny and the Huguenots in time of trouble summoned both English and German help, and that the League had had recourse to Austria, and that Condé had not denied himself the assistance of Spanish forces after the civil war called Fronde. Marie Antoinette admitted that Prussia, England, Holland might look with satisfaction upon the chaos and the apparent weakness that had replaced the strength of France; and therefore she suggested an alliance of the countries she called friendly: Spain, Russia, Austria, Sweden, and Denmark to oppose those others and to succor the French monarchy. "There will," she wrote, "be danger in allowing various daring agitators to continue to escape the punishment which their actions in France deserve; and this is not an ordinary political question, but the general cause of kings."

To move his enervated mass of flesh, his conscience was the King's only lever; it made him brave, but could not make him wise. Religious orthodoxy was fatal alike to him, to Charles I before him, to the last Czarina in her time. Eight months ago the King had signed the civil constitution of the clergy, feeling that he was helpless to resist; likewise he sanctioned the *decret du serment,* easing his conscience by a resolution, taken not long before, that he would, as soon as possible, resort to flight, for otherwise, he must continue to be untrue to his sense of duty as a Christian. He failed to understand, or

if he knew the fact he scorned to act accordingly, that the old conventional services had begun to lose their hold upon the masses; that the worldliness and immorality of church officials had made the people think less seriously than he of the prerogatives of the church; that *philosophes* ideas and reasonings which he despised had won a vast proportion of the nation. Some still believed as he did; but to the nation as a whole the old appeals could be no longer made. It had been better for the monarchy had it submitted to these changes which indeed were temporary; had it awaited nineteenth-century revivals of religious faith.

The King bent his poor energy toward flight. There was correspondence between Bouillé at Metz, Breteuil in Switzerland, Fersen in Paris, and the royal family in the Tuileries, and opinions wavered: Should Mirabeau's plan or Bouillé's be adopted ? Mirabeau, as has been observed, was for open and avowed withdrawal, depending on summoned French support. Bouillé was for secret escape toward the eastern border where French troops were to gather and behind them foreign forces in case of need. The King had almost decided upon Mirabeau's general plan when Mirabeau died, leaving the field open to Bouillé, but also to delays, distressing and apparently unavoidable until the question rose: Will the King actually ever go ? Difficulties increased, more and more troops went over to the revolution; yet the King, with the devoted federates of last year in his mind, trusted provincial loyalty, while the Queen had faith in soldiers whom her brother and his allies would provide.

The second April since the closing of Versailles had now arrived, and Louis desired to pass Holy Week in peace and orthodoxy at Saint-Cloud. Paris instantly decided that this was but a feint to hide intended exit from the country; and the problem of the priests produced a greater restlessness. The faithful who worshipped in the accustomed manner on Palm

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CONTRASTING VIEWS OF THE PLAYER QUEEN

Sunday at the Church of the Théatins were insulted by a mob which knew or guessed that the King was then attending Roman mass in secret in the Tuileries, and that he planned to leave the capital tomorrow. Foreseeing trouble, he was willing to give up the journey, but La Fayette and Bailly, sure that they held the people in control, urged him to go with his family on Monday morning down the palace steps, to enter his coach in spite of the crowd gathered round for angry protest. There he sat two hours while La Fayette vainly plied his eloquence, as on the Place de Grève two years ago. The people shouted: "The King knows not how to rule!"—which La Fayette could not deny. Servants were insulted, struck; and the Queen lost patience when she saw her son in tears because one of his attendants was in danger. She issued an imperious command, whereupon the mob howled: "There's a jolly bitch presuming to give orders!" The soldiers informed the King: "You misjudge us; we love you, we do not wish to see you go, and only ask that you give up your priests." But he replied ungraciously: "The mistake is yours, not mine. You have no right to doubt my good intentions, my wise love for my dear people." Violence increased, people and soldiers steadily refused to let the coach leave the courtyard, and at last the King and family walked back into their palace prison, thereby causing La Fayette and National Guardsmen to promise to protect them; whereupon the Queen hotly replied in futile misplaced anger to the marquis: "Yes, we count on you. But now, at last, perhaps, you will admit we are not free."

In the evening National Guardsmen searched the Tuileries for hidden priests; and later on that night the Carrousel resounded with a loud proclamation urging that the palace be attacked and that the doom which was not visited upon royalty during its last hours at Versailles be planned and executed now.

The King in the Assembly uttered next day his protests. Paris refused adequate apology, and insisted that he go on Easter Day to Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois in public recognition of the civil constitution of the clergy, to hear a civil-constituted mass. Did he not sign decrees last year? Then why should he be allowed to hold in private the service which his signature had openly renounced? The King and Queen were forced to go to the old church behind the Louvre, and at the door on Easter Day, as frequently at other times and places since the beginning of the revolution, these vanquished rulers received the ironic tribute of applause. The general dilemma passed all patience; the King's outraged conscience, the Queen's haughty shame had reached a turning point. Now more than ever they resolved to leave this Paris which was growing every day more insolent, with the implication that abject concessions might seem to satisfy it now, but that the time was coming when it would weary of mere humiliations.

"The guard surrounds us with a constant menace," wrote the Queen to Mercy, "our lives are in the greatest danger, and we must have done with all of this . . . Can you arrange with Austria to have fifteen thousand men, under whatever pretext, sent to Arlon and Virton [in Luxembourg near the French border] and as many more to Mons [Belgium] as M. de Bouillé wishes? It will help him in the work of gathering together the troops and munitions at Montmédy. . . I can perfectly conceive that the Emperor might be unwilling to order his troops to enter France, for it might expose him to the enmity of his foes; and yet, considering that this request comes from his ally and brother-in-law whose life and honor are at stake, I think that there is justice in the cause." She meant, as she more precisely stated in later letters, that foreign troops were not to enter France except as cohorts of French forces in case of dire necessity. Her idea was that Austrian regiments should stand just outside France in threatening

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ABOUT 1785

readiness to act if all else failed. Moreover, this approach of an imperial army was likewise to act as an excuse for the movements of Bouillé's troops which thus might appear to have been ordered to defend the frontiers, whereas, of course, these men of Bouillé were actually to be gathering to protect the intended flight of King and Queen. Marie Antoinette was impatient for a definite answer to her questions and she asked again: "Can I count on Austrian co-operation, *yes* or *no?* I have begged repeatedly for a positive reply, which has not yet arrived. . . Our position is a frightful danger; no one who is not here can form a picture of it. Either we must blindly do whatever the revolution may demand, or fall beneath the sword that hangs suspended every hour above our heads. Believe me I do not exaggerate the peril that surrounds us. You know that I believed in patient, passive, hopeful waiting for public opinion to turn to our support. Now all is changed; and we must die or take this chance which I have named and which indeed is full of risk; but, if our doom is sealed, then let us perish in a determined effort to perform our duties in the name of honor and religion. . . The King has been preparing a manifesto which must be made public as soon as he shall have escaped from Paris. It explains the reasons for his flight, flatters his people with expressions of affection, offers pardon to all but the chief agitators including Paris itself if at a given date it shall have failed to lay down arms and to obey. We have decided to take as basis for the constitution the declaration of the twenty-third of June with whatever modifications circumstances and events may lead us to adopt. The King must have the impressive mastership that comes with force and courage. . . He must make this enterprise a triumph."

The constitution *and* the twenty-third of June — what had they in common ? That date had marked, in the last summer of Versailles, the monarchy's last efforts to assert itself, when

the King had issued positive instructions to the Assembly which that body had defied. The ultimatum of the twenty-third of June was a denial of the constitution not yet made and which the King had since, against his will, accepted, and which he still believed to be impossible, and which he now determined to defeat.

The King had wavered all along between two general remedies — force and flight. Now he resorted to both at once: to return as soon as possible from his flight with a great force to reduce the capital to submission. He had tried all other remedies. He had attempted to compromise with the Assembly, to co-operate with Mirabeau, to induce the *émigrés* to act according to his will, and he had convinced himself that he had given all these expedients fair and full trials which, none the less, had proved them ineffectual. Above all a desperately involved conscience made him desperate, and, if he failed, there would be nothing left for him but death.

Repeated humiliations, irritations, shame, injustice, helplessness had saddened but had not embittered Louis. They had more deeply stung the Queen's keen pride; and calumny, knowing this, decided that she wanted blood to flow in torrents over France. She did look forward to the punishment of bandits, traitors, to the disgrace of treacherous friends and relatives. Could justice call her to account for such an attitude ? It did not matter, for in that germ of truth that in her mind there was a purpose of revenge however natural and right, calumny saw convincing evidence of intended, planned, and ruthless massacre. Well, then, she thought, what can I do ? When I advised the helpless government I was accused of meddling; when I remained secluded, passive in the Tuileries, I was accused of building up a scheme of horrible revenge, conceived in secret, to be publicly made known too late for France to save itself from all the instruments of my blind rage. I tried most earnestly to work with Necker who

deserted us; with La Fayette who made many promises only to break them; with Mirabeau who won my confidence only to counsel civil war which was the trap whereby he meant to turn us over to our enemies. The King and I have tried to humor the Assembly and the result has been that it demands more and more concessions incompatible with a sense of honor or of justice. We must resort to force. There is no other way. What forces can be summoned ? French troops are going daily over to the revolution; therefore it is clear that we must depend to some extent upon a concentrated mass of foreign allies which, by threatening invasion, will frighten France into submission. Only the monarchy can bring content and happiness to a distracted nation, and only by the use of force can monarchy be restored.

The Queen could see no flaw in such an argument; and she was busy with a thousand preparations for departure. She had no time to think of other things, or, if she had, she would not change her thoughts.

Paris looks down upon its palaced prisoners, scornfully, even a little carelessly, for, if these poor captives should attempt to fly, they can most easily be caught again. Are they not guarded against all escape ? Is it not doubtful that they'll try ? Day after day goes by, day after day they linger. Paris hears repeated rumors: They will go tonight — but in the morning they are in the palace as before. Will they, can they really go ?

CHAPTER VIII

MADAME ROCHET'S FLIGHT

Etes-vous à ce point parmi nous étrangère?

— RACINE

TOWARD the first morning light a heavy coach under a towering catafalque of baggage has dragged its weight of desperation in the illusion of accomplished safety; has come creaking to a halt for fresh horses at Bondy when a man dressed as coachman jumps from his seat, calls at the carriage window: "Adieu, Mme Korff !"; but he is thinking of another lady who now waves an unutterable farewell; and he looks at the ring which she had put upon his finger.

Whips crack, wheels turn again; the dawn brightens through the clouds, hope whispers in the minds of this *émigrée* and her companions who talk gaily as if on a holiday. Horses are exchanged without incident at Meaux, where early risers are not amazed at passing travellers these days. On toward Châlons, munching a picnic lunch. The day is warm, and Durand, Mme Korff's servant, gets out to stretch his legs with Mme Korff's two children while the slow coach creeps up a hill with Mme Rochet, children's governess, her mistress, and another lady. At Viels-Maisons Durand talks with bystanders, asks peasants about crops, is recognized by one who holds his tongue.

Early in the afternoon there happens that one day in many months to be at Chaintrix one Vallet who was present at the Feast of Federation, saw the King and Queen, sees them now through thin disguise of employees of Mme Korff who hides her title, governess of the Children of France. Royalty rejoices,

receives devoted rural greetings, scatters gifts of recognition. Safety is sure. Vallet mounts one of the horses when the postilions, former members of the King's body-guard, mount theirs. He urges speed which causes a slight mishap to the harness and a slight delay; but here at four o'clock is Châlons, with its memories of twenty-one years ago, where crowds had greeted a young Austrian princess, where crowds now gather, where certain subjects know their King, their Queen, convinced perhaps by Vallet's indiscreet admission, full at any rate of prayers for monarchy in flight. It is as the King had thought: "Paris is not all France, and I can trust the provinces." But on the road beyond Châlons a rider dashes up to the coach: "You will be recognized" — and dashes on again. Is this the man they saw some hours ago who seemed to follow, then turned off ? The travellers are not apprehensive, for they will soon be under the protection of troops awaiting them at the next post, at Pont de Somme-Vesle where the coach halts, the King looks out — no soldiers. The ground appears to sink beneath his gaze. What must be done ? Go on, of course, for to return is quite impossible, but faster. No, this coach cannot make speed. Well then, as fast as may be on the long straight road to Sainte-Menehould where troops will surely be, where hope may flourish.

For the first time today the sun breaks through the clouds as if in sign of comfort. Yet there, nearby, is Valmy mill — but no one knows that France will triumph there next year. Now here is Sainte-Menehould, and here are soldiers; all is well. The Queen looks out, notes military recognition, bows with that special gracious majesty which an unqueenly costume cannot hide. While tired horses are replaced, unknown faces gaze into the carriage, among them one of stern expression, not gaping like the rest. Off goes the coach, and leaves a pair of eyes which fix themselves upon a piece of paper-money stamped with the image of the King. No doubt now;

Drouet knows, and Drouet is no monarchist. His knowledge spreads and Sainte-Menehould is in an uproar, while the sober part of it allows this Drouet and a friend Guillaume to gallop after the slow-moving vehicle that departed half an hour ago.

Clouds gathered when the sun set. It is night, and in the darkness horses that pulled the coach to Clermont are being ridden back along the road up which dashes Drouet to whom these riders shout: "The coach is going to Varennes!" He turns into the forest; he cannot see his path, for the moon shines faintly through the clouds and trees, but he must reach Varennes before the King, and avoid escorting soldiers on the road. Had he not met those riders he would have galloped straight to Verdun toward which he had assumed the King was moving. Meanwhile the weary trustful travellers sleep, the coach sways slowly on, and Drouet shoots madly through the woods.

Halt at the outskirts of Varennes where another team should be awaiting royalty. The King wakes up, gets out, knocks at the door, but no one knows about the horses; and for the first time on this journey, fate shakes the consciousness of the Queen. Something must be done. Go up into the higher town where horses must be waiting, where Bouillé's son with the vanguard of his father's forces had all these hours of delay been waiting until, convinced of hopelessness, he had allowed himself to sleep. But the drivers of the King's horses will not budge; their team is tired; it must none the less return at once to Clermont to be ready for the fields at early dawn. . . Time lost in pleading, arguing, threatening, still grants a compromise: the coach moves on into Varennes, but will advance no further than the town without a relay. The street goes under an archway below an old church, and as the fugitives approach: "Halt, or we fire!" The coach creaks and rumbles to a stop. "Show your passports!" "Hurry," cries

the Queen sharply through the carriage window, "we wish to reach our destination promptly." The passports are delivered to officials, examined, found in order; the travellers may proceed. But a thundering voice proclaims: "It is the royal family. If you let them go, you are guilty of high treason !" "Well," says grocer Sauce, a representative of petty town authority, who has no such conviction, "tomorrow we shall see." Now the King once more summons his lost power of command: "Forward, postilions !" But again the answer: "If you advance, we open fire." The carriage has not moved; a crowd has gathered. Through the forest Drouet had won the race, aroused the sleepy village, summoned cohorts with Guillaume's aid and barricaded a bridge beyond this archway through which the King may not pass. Lights shine in windows and the tocsin sounds, while Sauce conducts the strangers to his house nearby, saying: "There will be daylight in three hours; we shall see."

Doors of a grocer close behind a King, a Queen, and their new guardians who argue that this slow-moving man has worn the crown. "If you recognize your King," sternly commands the Queen, "treat him with the respect which is his due." Enter one Destez who bends his knee: "Ah ! Sire . . ." Moved by the gesture, Louis confesses: "Yes, I am your King," and opens generous arms, embraces Destez, Sauce, other municipals; calmly explains why he left Paris, while his children lie exhausted on a bed, and while the Queen in trembling agitation feels every chance of their escape slip by, as if her blood were flowing from an open wound. The sound of horses' feet quickens dead hope, and now appear Choiseul, Damas, and Goguelat whose troops were to have guarded royalty against all possible distress. Where are those troops ? Some are in the town, some have gone over to the side of France. "Shall we force our way ?" asks Choiseul with more of courage than of hope. "But if they should shoot at us,"

wonders the King. "Perhaps they will, but let us try this desperate chance." The Queen is fervent for departure. "No," says the King, "there must be no bloodshed. Besides, Sauce has promised we shall go anon, and Bouillé with the main defending force will be here at any moment now. He was to have met us just beyond Varennes; he must be near, and we must wait for him."

"At least," says Damas, "let me take the Dauphin on my horse."

But royalty has resolved to fly or die together; and suddenly the Queen, encouraged by the presence of friendly Choiseul, Damas, Goguelat, tells them that she took her children driving yesterday afternoon in Paris; that the family went to bed that night as usual, then arose and put on these costumes. "We must be going to act in a comedy," the Dauphin had guessed. Fersen, as coachman, had waited just outside the Tuileries for his friends who arrived severally under separate escort, the children with their governess coming first. Mme Royale bumped into a sentinel and narrowly escaped; the stumbling King was steadied by another ignorant guard.

The Queen came last of all. She passed close to La Fayette's carriage, and whipped the wheels with her little stick, thinking what a face that clumsy dancer of other days who now had grown so great (M. Blondinet as she had always called him) would make next morning when he learned that the King whom he had seen the night before preparing sleepily to go to bed, had managed to leave Paris an hour later. The Queen's guide had lost the way, had wandered far while Fersen sat in agony till finally with precious moments lost and many others still to lose, they had all started off. A romantic, exciting, and successful exit from a palace jail, the Queen had thought. The King, as soon as he had passed the city's gates had been exultant. "Here I am free from Paris where I en-

dured so many miseries. Once in the saddle I will be another man, as you shall see." On to Claye where two waiting women joined the travellers in a cabriolet which followed the great coach; and thus the entire party far too large, too confident, too careless, and too slow, for desperate circumstances, moved away.

While the Queen talks the crowd outside increases; National Guardsmen gather from nearby villages to the astonishment of the King who had not dreamed the revolution had a net so strong to tighten round him. Varennes trembles, hearing that Bouillé is on his way to visit fire and plunder on the town, and Choiseul's few remaining soldiers join the hostile crowd.

The sun is rising; a window opens, and the mob, seeing the King in drab clothes less incongruous than robes of state on such a figure, is moved for a brief, unreasoning moment to applaud. At five comes Deslon with his sixty horsemen, helpless against so many people, yet this officer asks for orders from the King who says: "Alas, I am a prisoner without power to command." Minute by minute the throng increases, the village is the crowded centre toward which more and still more Frenchmen move across the fields, along the roads. The King's path is blocked, but still the fugitives hope for Bouillé while the mob keeps up its chorus: "To Paris !" When someone cries: "The King insists on going to Montmédy," the people clamor still more loudly: "No ! to Paris, or we'll shoot him in his carriage !" which vehicle none the less the King now orders, but to no effect; and once again the Queen is desperate. Will Bouillé never come ? Enter, instead, grandmother Sauce, aged eighty, a peasant brought up on traditions of the monarchy, who makes her bow, approaches the bed to bless the Children of France, breaks into tears, sobs, kneels, hides her poor wrinkled face in the bedclothes, bewails the doom of King that is and King that was to be, lingers for a futile moment here with the few remaining

friends of royalty — officers devoid of troops. Even if Bouillé should come now, it would be too late, for if he conquered this determined village, all France would rise to set it free.

Just at this moment arrives Bayon from the capital: "Sire, Paris is in turmoil; our wives, our children will be massacred. Nothing but your return can prevent bloodshed." The Queen points to the bed: must this boy and girl be sacrificed to save others ? She turns to look aghast at Romeuf who now enters, who had been attached to her service, to whom she had been kind: "I could not have believed that you would come." He gives the King the Assembly's decree, and, after reading it, poor Louis says: "There is no longer any King in France," and hands the paper to his wife who reads with angry shame. The King glances over it again, then puts it on the bed, whereupon Marie Antoinette, losing all patience, seizes the document, flings it on the floor: "It shall not contaminate my children !" (The day before a street-walker who had got into the Queen's room in the Tuileries tore off a bonnet belonging to her majesty which someone had placed upon this woman's head: "It shall not contaminate me !" she yelled) — "Madame," says Romeuf now to Marie Antoinette, "do you wish others to see you've lost your self-control ?" She blushes, recovers her composure and her silence, while Choiseul picks up the paper, lays it on the table. She had forgot that many Frenchmen hold as sacred the decrees of the long-winded Assembly, and, for the moment, she regrets that she did not assume an air of indifference.

Now the King asks Bayon and Romeuf to defer the threatened retreat a little longer. They agree. But, as if angered by the Queen's display of temper, Bayon goes down and tells the crowd their majesties do not consent to go. "We'll drag them by the feet, then," shrieks the mob, to which once more the King now shows himself, only to hear as on October 6

at Versailles, increasing, obstinate, the roar: "To Paris! To Paris!" In vain the King beseeches National Guardsmen to let him wait another hour; in vain the Queen implores Mme Sauce for help, but the grocer's wife replies: "God knows, Madame, your danger, but I must protect my husband and my children."

Slight, futile, tantalizing delays still flaunt their irony in the Queen's face in contrast to its work behind her back before she reached Varennes. Food is being prepared by Mme Sauce who has at least a pity which involves her in no risk. Now one of the Queen's ladies faints, and Marie Antoinette gasps: "She is too ill to travel and I will not desert her"; but a summoned doctor says the invalid is well. There is no reason why the royal family and its attendants should not leave Sauce's house to the door of which the people have pulled the heavy coach and faced it west. In one last desperate supplication King and Queen ask Sauce to get for them a box of papers from the carriage. "Alas!" they wail, "if we had stayed in Paris the Orléanist party would have crushed us. What will happen to us when we return?" The box is brought, frantically opened; papers have been snatched out, torn, and set on fire when an alarm terrifies the King who throws out everything burnt, unburnt, and burning into the inner courtyard whence some of it blows into the street where people pick up the scattered sheets but cannot read the writing. No matter — nothing could more firmly convince the crowd already certain that royalty had defied the national will.

It is half-past seven; the horses have been harnessed, the postilions are in the saddles, the soldiers hired by the King are drinking with the people to the nation. There is not the slightest possibility of the shortest additional delay. The captives, desperate, helpless, now appear. The awkward King looks vexed; the Queen, trembling, clutches Choiseul's arm; Damas escorts Mme Elizabeth; then come the children with

their governess. Once more obedience wins an instant's *"Vive le Roi !"* but there are louder shouts of *"Vive la Nation !"* and not one *"Vive la Reine !"* When Choiseul closes the carriage door the Queen leans out, cries: "Do not leave us !" but the carriage moves away; and the crowd like a wave nearing the shore rises, crashes on Choiseul and Damas, passes over them, hides them from straining eyes too terrified for tears; for Marie Antoinette's abandonment is more complete than any she has ever known. A soldier in a doorway sees her hold out her hands as if invoking aid, as if she knew that she is going to her death; and he will long remember this the most piteous distress that he has seen. He can do nothing for her; he watches the great coach slide slowly down the hill toward Paris. She cannot rail like Mary Stuart on the way to Edinburgh, for at this time her agony drowns her anger and she refrains along the road from begging all the passersby to rescue her, unlike the Queen of Scots who leaned dishevelled from her window with a general appeal. The Austrian princess shrinks into a corner of the coach, which, hour by hour, grinds with heavy wheels the crowd-choked highway. The day is hotter, the journey longer than that which now might seem in retrospect a trifling misery, the exodus of monarchy from Versailles to Paris.

The mob believes a rumor that Bouillé is setting Varennes on fire. But Bouillé is far away. Approaching Varennes an hour and a half after the coach had left, his soldiers had grumbled, and he had heard of furious troops from Metz and Verdun marching against him and the King. This made him finally decide that he could do no good, must turn about, ride sadly eastward, leaving Varennes to undisputed revolutionary glory.

The carriage creeps through the increasing dust and heat, the crowd is reinforced by country folk from every side, and curious or frightful faces peer through the open windows at

abasement and dishonor, uttering their favorite insult: *"Vive la Nation !"* accompanied by the roll of drums, by church-bell tocsins, as if all rural France united mocked defeat, and threatened penalties with an onrushing avalanche of hate.

Arriving again at Sainte-Menehould a dust-caked and perspiring King, a drab and unkempt Queen eat lunch while their exhausted children sleep. The meal respectfully served by municipal dignitaries is generous, even delicate; the King grows cheerful, talkative, while the Queen, watchfully attentive to her children, gains indirectly a touch of sympathy. She accepts with alacrity the mayor's offer of his house for further rest, thinking the Dauphin dangerously worn out; but the impatient crowd below demands that royalty appear again upon a balcony to hear *"Vive la Nation !"* and little else except a sudden snarling *"A Paris !"* "Well, let us go," says the compliant King, though the mid-afternoon is blisteringly hot, the sweating mob more heated, and its thirst unquenched by wine. On up the hill and straight along a dusty road between parched fields through which an unwise country gentleman, though threatened by the people, rides to salute his King. He spurs his horse which, stumbling, falls; and a great mass of humanity surrounds the rider, shoots him, drags him in torture back toward the carriage, drops him in a ditch where a rain of bullets leaves him dead. "What is happening ?" asks Louis. "Nothing," says someone near the coach, "just a fool who is being killed."

The crowd increases at the outskirts of Châlons; the travellers stop at the Porte Dauphine where, twenty-one years ago the Queen, a foreign princess, had been greeted; where now a high arch stands with this inscription: "May this monument last as long as our love." It still stands, surrounded by French hatred, though Châlons itself has not lost all fond consideration. In the palace where the Dauphine had lodged, a weary King and Queen must undergo municipal receptions

and a supper served at one, which even Louis is too tired to eat. At two these prisoners may sleep for the first time on beds since, forty-eight hours ago, they left the Tuileries. But now a gleam of hope drives away slumber, for friends whisper: "Why not stay here, waiting for loyalty to gather a defensive strength ?" The National Guards of Châlons offer to escort the King to Montmédy, but cannot undertake Queen, children, and all the others who make up the royal suite; therefore Louis will not budge. He hears of reinforcements on the way from Reims, and he will try to linger, get a wink of sleep to give them time. In a few short hours it is half-past nine. The day is bright, and there is an uproar at the palace gate. The expected Remois have arrived but they are cohorts of the mob, urging that the King be dragged to Paris by way of their city where he may be shown a captive in the place where, sixteen years ago, he was applauded at his coronation. There is, then, no hope for a deserted monarch except prayer which he may offer in palace chapel, gaining, in pursuit of heavenly solace, time for earthly help to overtake him. Scarcely has the service begun when the crowd thunders protests in co-operation with the citizens of Reims who howl their wish to make belts of royal skin. Municipals achieve a momentary lull; the mass drones on; then stones are hurled at palace windows and again the cry: "Bouillé is coming !" vanquishes all hope for patience. The King, again upon a balcony, signifies willingness to go as soon as carriages can be made ready, which is so speedily accomplished that there is not time for fugitives to eat the food prepared by friends.

Soldiers of Châlons surround the coach, trying to keep the mob now grown so large in order, but a few miles east of the city a clever tale makes them rush back to save their homes and families from announced destruction now descending on them. Thus King and Queen are turned completely over to the rabble for four hours of slow progress through the

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dust and heat, and no one dares protest when some ruffian sticks his head in at the window, spits in the King's face, making the Queen weep with anger, weariness, and fear. Observers in the doorways of the villages through which they pass are sure these travellers will be murdered before their journey's end.

At five o'clock at Epernay royalty must walk from coach to inn through a weapon-wielding mob in which a man is heard to say: "Hide me while I fire at the Queen!" but here again as on the Versailles balcony, for some mysterious reason she is spared, while soldiers of the town, as best they can, hold open a narrow passageway. The Queen's dress, torn in hurrying by, is patched by the landlord's daughter when all have gathered safely in the house; when the Dauphin, carried by a bodyguard postilion, and terrified at losing sight of his mother for a moment, has been comforted. Dinner is served in a room opening on to the courtyard where the uproar of enemies nearest the window is calmed when those who had thought to see abasement or pride or anger in the captives' faces notice their serenity. These creatures whisper: "The prisoners seem good people" — an observation which their more distant cohorts cannot make, and therefore royalty returning to the coach, must run another gauntlet.

The sun is near its setting, the heat still sweltering when the procession meets three deputies from Paris — Barnave, Pétion, La Tour-Maubourg. The crowd is at once respectful to these persons who approach the carriage in which confused sounds indicate that its occupants ignore the insult of this popular reception, forgetting all but a new hope that these men mean safety. The Queen in tears leans out: "Messieurs! Messieurs! Ah! Monsieur de Maubourg!" giving him her hand, extending the other to Barnave, "Ah! Monsieur, Monsieur! Save the postilions!" whom the crowd, if possible, hates still more than it hates Louis and Marie Antoinette.

"The King did not intend to leave France," cries Mme Elizabeth. "That is true," the King repeats, "I did not intend to emigrate, I say again; that is quite true." Pétion barely nods, and reads a decree of the Assembly to which the awed mob listens while the sun sinks in a red blaze. Barnave and Pétion enter the coach and say: "Sire, I fear we'll crowd you, there's no room"; but the King shifts his position, the Queen sets her son upon her knee, Barnave takes his place between their majesties, Pétion opposite between Mmes Elizabeth and Tourzel. Mme Royale sits on her governess' lap, while Maubourg gets into the cabriolet with the Queen's ladies.

The coach moves on, and royalty at once renews its protests in excited chorus: "We had no thought of leaving France!" "At Châlons," says the King, "we heard a constitutional mass." Then there is silence. The Queen lowers her veil embarrassed by a consciousness of excessive explanation; then, quickly changing, she decides to talk. It is all part of the general dissimulation which the revolution has forced upon her from the first. Seeing Barnave's gaze fixed meaningly on the postilions, knowing he thinks one of them is Fersen, she pronounces their names. Bolder Pétion says he has heard the Queen was driven out of Paris by a Swede whose name he pretends to have forgotten, and Marie Antoinette imperiously replies: "I am not in the habit of knowing the names of cab-drivers." Then once again she speaks with gracious informality, bouncing on her knee the Dauphin who asks many childish questions. Noticing Barnave's buttons, he reads: *"Vivre libre ou mourir,"* proudly showing off his skill, but she makes no reply. "Look, mother. It says on every button, Freedom or Death." The Queen, still silent, feels the irony of this insistence of the child whose parents live enslaved.

To change the subject, Marie Antoinette narrates incidents of the journey. "And would you believe that when I offered a morsel of chicken to a National Guardsman at the carriage

window, the cry was raised: 'Be careful, it is poisoned!'? Indignantly I gave some of it to the children and ate a piece myself." Possessed by nervous exhaustion, by the exhilarating sense of safety these deputies have caused, she speaks with loosened tongue and pride oblivious to injury, talks almost gaily of these hours. The children fall asleep, the King drops off, and Mme Elizabeth leaning drowsily against Pétion makes him fatuously assume that she is flirting. As the coach moves on through moonlit fields, its occupants are silent except for serious conversation between Barnave and the Queen whose mutual sympathy is born in the long hours of a radiant night.

"Vive la Nation!" shouts the mob as the coach is emptied at the inn of Dormans. Barnave thinks it better to decline a royal invitation to supper; he sits with his two colleagues in another room and drinks a bottle of Tokai which the King, not conscious of the insult of one rejected offer, has sent as supplementary attention. At the table of the fugitives a waiter whispers: "Come, escape! A boat is ready on the river, and it will take you to a place where vehicles may be procured." The Queen is set upon the waiter's scheme at once, but the King answers: "No. I trust in the good city of Paris." Good, indeed. Only three nights ago he left it in despair; only two nights ago at Varennes he would have turned his back on the Assembly whose representatives he now believes will bring him safely back into his palace prison. The Queen is frantic, argues hotly, but nothing can weaken Louis' obstinacy. Tonight his son dreams of being lost with his mother in a forest full of hungry wolves. Waking in terror at the howl of animals, there proves to be a background for his dream — the mob is roaring in the courtyard.

The King, as if to impress Pétion, is delivering a learned dissertation in the coach early next morning when all at once his ears betray the pedantry of his speech. He stops, blushes, shifts his position awkwardly, hides his embarrassment, by

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resorting to a study of his maps over which his near-sightedness requires him to bend his head, while Pétion, looking out, observes: "There is no kingdom so beautiful as France." "Madame," says Barnave in answer to Mme Elizabeth's reference to something concerning the Feast of Federation, "we would have been lost if you had known how to make the most of that occasion." The Queen, while eating a pigeon, exposes her views on education, and when she asks Barnave a question he turns away. "Tell him," laughs Marie Antoinette in his companion's direction, "not to gaze at the landscape when I address him."

The day is very hot; Pétion asks for a drink and scarcely thanks Mme Elizabeth when she pours for him a glass of water. The Queen would like to close the windows to keep out the dust, but the mob refuses its permission. At Château-Thierry, an hour before noon, the people demand that "Louis and Toinette" show their heads; that the Dauphin cry: *"Vive la Nation !"* The deputies, weary of popular uproar, instruct the National Guards to prevent the mob from following the coach which hastens out of Château-Thierry.

Again, at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, the King invites the Assemblymen to dine with him, again experiencing dully their power to refuse. On into new crowds, new insults, and new violence which, but for Barnave's intervention would have effected death for a friendly, unwise priest along the way. Then, after many hours, weary, suffocating, the travellers reaching Meaux enter by torchlight the grim palace of Bossuet whose eloquence once celebrated the divine right of Kings; who would not have believed that a descendant of the Sun King could ever be this wretched, hunted bourgeois.

Marie Antoinette and Barnave walk in the bishop's garden. "Alas, how can I win the love of the people who have turned against me ?" asks Marie Antoinette when Barnave advises her to try to regain popularity. "You have but to make the

effort," he replies. She feels that Barnave is her friend, but knows he cannot see in the obscurity of the garden the smile with which she passes judgment on his optimism. She returns with him to the palace where an elaborate supper is served for guests too weary to enjoy it. The great crowd mutters in the outer darkness all night long; and once again a brilliant morning, promising another clear hot day, shines upon a crawling caravan at six.

Farther and farther into the fields on either side stretches the ever larger, angrier crowd approaching the "good" city of Paris, while shouting drunken women frighten the Dauphin and bring tears of anger to the eyes of Marie Antoinette: "Don't show us your son, you bitch! We know that fat Louis is not his father"; like the soldiers crying: "Burn the whore!" along the road that Marie Stuart followed to captivity. The coach makes a wide detour to the western gate, avoiding more dangerous suburbs, and at last the long procession moves down the Champs-Elysées.

It had been placarded in Paris: "Whoever applauds the King will be whipped; whoever insults him will be hanged." The city greets its captured monarch with imposing, ominous silence more damning than the roaring of the rural mob. The courage of one man who dares take off his hat draws instinctive respect from thousands who will not bare their heads. A citizen who has said: "Without a king we have slept well, and we've lost millions to gain a Louis," might wonder why that King should be brought back; but if he asked, he would be told: "Not because Paris loves him, but to keep him from joining our foreign enemies who are now to know that if they come to save him, he shall die." One man, for his own gratification, and with no thought of foreign menace, had resolved to kill the King, and walked a long way to Paris. There he changed his mind. From the beginning of the revolution something has always interferred with planned assassinations,

as if the time for once-crowned heads to fall had not yet come.

Down the packed avenue lined with National Guardsmen presenting arms as at a funeral, the procession passes observers perched on trees and house-tops, to the silent crowded Place Louis XV where the King sees the blindfolded statue of his grandfather. He is driven through the gardens straight to the Tuileries, passing on the left the Salle de Manège, where the Assembly in perpetual session since the King's departure, still strings out resolutions. The crushing mob must be kept back from the coach now standing at the foot of the palace steps. "Death to the postilions!" shriek the people brandishing their pikes around the carriage, breaking through the passageway which soldiers struggle to maintain up the stairs. The postilions escape with wounds and torn uniforms; and La Fayette, rallying his guards, succeeds in thrusting back the mob which suddenly obeys him when it sees an approaching deputation of Assemblymen. A renewed silence holds its sway while the King appears, walks up the steps, enters the Tuileries. Now Marie Antoinette, escorted by the deputies, is greeted by angry murmurs as she hurries to the palace portal; but to the Dauphin and to Mme Royale certain voices cry: "The French have hope in you." After the children come their aunt and governess; and now the palace closes in around the royal family, shutting out the mob.

It was the evening of the fifth long day of dust and heat and hatred. The smiling King walked up the great inner stairway to his rooms, followed by the Queen who saw no cause for cheer. They were talking with the deputies when Marie Antoinette cried out in terror: "Where is the Dauphin?" She had not seen him since she left the carriage. She almost fancied for a moment that he might be kept from her. Someone rushed to find him, rushed back again to say the child had been carried to his room thoroughly exhausted but unharmed.

The Queen was calm again. Then seeing La Fayette her indignation rose. She remembered that five nights ago she could have sworn she had defeated him. Now with ill-disguised contempt she offered him her baggage keys; but he refused them ceremoniously. She threw them at the hat he held respectfully in hand; they fell; he would not stoop to pick them up. "Then I'll find one who will," she angrily retorted, hoping for the one small triumph there might be for her that night, the futile search for letters burnt and scattered at Varennes. But no one cared to search her baggage, for there could be no more convincing evidence of treachery in all her bags than in the fact of her flight.

When La Fayette asked the King for his orders: "I rather seem," laughed Louis, "to be at your command." The general, like half of Paris, was almost ready to forgive the King, but never again to trust nor to respect him. Louis' declaration, read in the Assembly, had made it clear that while in Paris he had signed decrees unwillingly, had been forced to sign them, but regarded his signature as meaningless in reference to laws which he could neither approve nor prevent; and, further, that no one should hold him responsible for activities over which he could not exercise control. The Assembly not only held him accountable, however, but inferred that he now would give no heartier co-operation to the constitution than he had given heretofore.

Paris, however, would not even pardon Marie Antoinette to this extent, but hate her still more bitterly, holding her directly and entirely responsible for this flight, crediting her with treachery intended, planned, and still to be attempted ruthlessly, no thought predominant in her mind except revenge on France. That Paris had thus judged her she knew well, and that her life depended on the war she now declared in secret against the revolution. She had tried waiting, she had tried escape, and both had failed. How could she win a victory?

She did not know. Returning from Varennes she had at least accomplished one thing: she had made one friend, Barnave. Had he the power to save her ? She did not know. But with him then, with someone else thereafter, as opportunity might present itself, she resolved to make a supreme effort. To wait for the revolution to run its course would be disastrous and it was impossible to escape from Paris. Therefore she would crush her enemies where she stood, once and for all.

CHAPTER IX

THE TRAITRESS

On vient à mon secours. Tremblez, troupe rebelle!
— RACINE

If treason prosper, none dare call it treason.
— SIR JOHN HARRINGTON

IS IT POSSIBLE to lie more brazenly than Marie Antoinette has lied ?" the members of the Assembly wondered when they heard her statement that if the King had been attempting to leave France when captured at Varennes she would have done all she could to block his path. When they came to question her she seated herself upon an ordinary chair, offering her guests the armed variety, a reversal of etiquette no more pleasing than her manner or her words. Nor could she please herself in a more closely guarded palace prison in which mirrors held before her a sad, weary face, and hair turned grey. It was more difficult than ever to receive a few remaining friends. Guards were more numerous, more observant than before; and one of them presumed with kind intention, to talk to her one night when she was in her bed.

From Bondy where Fersen left the fugitives, he had gone to Belgium, sure that the Queen was safe. At Arlon he heard the story of Varennes, and at Brussels he received this letter from Marie Antoinette. "I exist. How I have worried about you, and how you must have suffered without news of us! Heaven grant that this may reach you, but do not answer it, for we would be compromised if our correspondence were discovered. Above all, do not come to us on any account. It is known that you assisted us in leaving Paris, and all would be

lost if you were found here where we are watched day and night, but I do not care, for you may rest assured that nothing will happen to me, for the Assembly seems inclined to treat us kindly. I cannot write more." To Esterhazy, some weeks later, she wrote: "If you see Fersen, tell him I know more truly now than ever that distance cannot separate devoted hearts. I need the love of my friends to strengthen my courage. I work for our interests only, for who that is near us merits our help ? I despise the general run of men too much to think of them at all." She sent Esterhazy a ring and one for Fersen marked with three fleur-de-lys and the inscription: "Cowards abandon them." She wrote again to Fersen: "I may tell you that I love you. Let me know where to write to you, for I cannot live without that comfort. Adieu, most loving and most loved, whom I embrace with all my heart."

And now to map out a plan of action — but what plan ? She thought frequently of Barnave, sure that she had no better friend in France. He thought of her and of that journey with her which he one day described as "a time engraved forever in my memory, a picture of misfortune which has helped me to endure my own." To him she wrote: "What must be done ? You have worked for the welfare of France and so will we. I will do anything, whatever the cost, if I can see it as a step toward order re-established. I utterly rely upon your zeal, force, resourcefulness in furthering the interests of the State which are identical with those of the King and of his son."

She did not, never would believe to this extent in Barnave's wisdom, but she felt she would be blameless in anything she might do or say, because her purpose based on this belief that the interests of the King and France were one and indivisible, would justify her. That King and France could gain contentment, happiness together and in no other way, was her unalterable faith.

Barnave replied that King and Queen must work with France, must consistently uphold the constitution in appearance and in truth; must not again try flight; must urge the Emperor in particular and as many other sovereigns as possible to recognize and show clear friendliness to the constitution; must, if possible, persuade the King's brothers to return; must induce the Emperor to give the *émigrés* no help if they attacked the new French government, which, of course, they had resolved to do. One of them had said: "If the King, the Queen, and the children are sacrificed there is still the comte d'Artois for that which mainly matters — the restoration of the monarchy."

The Queen expressed her acquiescence, knowing the various difficulties involved; and she wrote Fersen: "The King believes that only by negotiation can foreign powers be of service to him; that they must use force only if the revolutionists make all manner of conference impossible. We must do all we can to induce our subjects to work with us, for otherwise the King will lack all power to resist them."

The germ of diverging policy is in this letter, and the announced co-operative zeal of Marie Antoinette in connection with Barnave soon showed its limitations. When the people protested against the Assembly's decree restoring the constitutional authority of the King and declaring him inviolable, there was a minor massacre on the Champ de Mars which led the Queen to doubt Barnave at once, to jump to the conclusion that he and his friends Duport and Lameth whom she had benefited in past years were ungrateful, perhaps inclined to side with insurrection which she thought they could suppress. But with Barnave and these men she continued to correspond (her letters to and from them carried by Jarjayes), for she was determined neither to quarrel with them, nor to blindly follow them as guides, but to keep them in her confidence as she kept Mirabeau, and still to trust especially in

help from over the border. "I wish very much that you were here," she wrote Mercy, "for I fear I may have chosen the wrong course of action, and I need your advice."

Nevertheless, in apparent acceptance of Barnave's suggestion that she urge the Emperor to favor the constitution, she wrote Leopold II on July 30: "If the revolution should be brought to a halt, the King must gain new strength. The army is useless, lacking all discipline, and the country is full of armed men so easily excited that I cannot tell what they may do at any time, nor count the numbers of revolutionists it might be necessary for foreign troops to kill in order to reach Paris. You, my brother, are willing to make sacrifices for us, but these sacrifices would be dangerous in proportion to the part the nation might assume we played in urging you to make them." Therefore, she went on to say, the intervention of foreign forces being hazardous, it seemed expedient for Austria to recognize the constitution as soon as it had been completed and the King had sanctioned it.

Now note the letter she wrote Mercy on July 29: "I am sufficiently satisfied with Barnave, Duport, Lameth, the only men here with whom one can attempt to deal. They seem to desire the restoration of order, i. e. of the royal authority, but many of their ideas can never be acceptable to us. It is, however, extremely important, for some time to come, that I should make them think I share their views. The danger is incalculable if they should throw themselves against us, and I trust you to act wisely in consideration of this information." Again, on July 31: "I thought I ought to write you as I did, day before yesterday, in accordance with the expressed wishes of the men to whom I referred. I also wrote the Emperor yesterday and I should be humiliated if he does not see at once that my position forces me to act upon the directions I receive." She hoped that Mercy would understand and sympathize and explain her difficulties to the Emperor, and that both would

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help her play this game by which alone she could gain time for the more practical work of definite restoration of the power of the King. Surely they would realize that her position was far more favorable than theirs for judging the affairs of France; that she had attempted many things and, having failed, must have recourse to all the changing remedies that opportunism might suggest.

The exasperated Emperor and Mercy wondered what possessed Marie Antoinette. Leopold had no idea of recognizing the constitution; Mercy regarded Barnave, Duport, Lameth as treacherous demagogues, and both had more (though very little) confidence in the *émigrés* than in these upstarts. The Queen insisted that the *émigrés* could not be trusted; that Leopold must help her to persuade them to return to France. She dreaded specially Monsieur who succeeded in escaping to Belgium the night she started for Varennes. She knew Monsieur would be regent if Louis died, and that her position would therefore be intolerable during the Dauphin's minority, for she was convinced that Monsieur was even less devoted to her interests than to the King's. She had written him, but he, like Artois, had refused to act according to the wishes of the King. "You know the real intentions of the *émigrés,*" she wrote Mercy. "The cowards ! They betray us, they expect us to run every risk to serve them." Yet, for the moment, she held Calonne responsible in the first degree, knowing his influence upon the absent princes and his bitter hatred of herself. Here, once again, is an example of her attitude with regard to a group of enemies. She did not see the *émigrés* as an unfriendly whole; she saw Calonne as self-sufficient leader, and the King's brothers as his subordinates, corrupting all the others or fermenting into viciousness the otherwise dormant animosity of their associates.

Meanwhile her correspondence with Barnave continued. She asked to see a copy of the constitution, and, after reading

it: "I have been told it has a strong monarchical character. I should like to know why you think so," to which Barnave replied without sufficiently, to her sense, explaining that he perceived nothing objectionable, from any point of view, in the kingly power which the document permitted. The Queen confessed to Mercy: "The constitution is a monstrous work, a tissue of absurdities. It cannot operate successfully; it will annihilate the Kingdom." Yet it occurred to her that to put such a government in practice might prove its utter inefficiency more clearly than to refuse to give it countenance; and this experiment would have the additional advantage of giving evidence that she and Louis were working according to their contract with Barnave and Company.

These men, however, could not so easily be duped. Barnave knew that Marie Antoinette had written to the Emperor and to Mercy, but he suspected that she told them more or less than he had counselled her to say. He still pursued her with insistent instructions: She must appear more frequently in public, go to the theatre, fill the Tuileries with persons whom the nation trusted, make the court hospitable, gay; give France confidence in royalty, and turn the crown into a national glory. Had her taste changed that she should hesitate to enliven a dreary palace ? No, but she saw in Barnave's scheme all sorts of democratic innovations; a crowd of unattractive persons whom she must receive according to his view, and thereby anger the nobility who would despise receptions to which many vulgar upstarts would have to be admitted. The old elaborate etiquette was boring, but as for this new indecorus tolerance it would be unendurable, and, moreover, it might teach the French to scorn the court, for France respected etiquette. She would not, therefore, entertain in any manner but her own, nor consent to have friends chosen for her, but choose secluded sorrow in the Tuileries where she still imagined it to be within her power to close and hold doors locked against all France.

Mme de Lamballe had once more returned to Paris after an absence that began before the fiasco of Varennes; but Marie Antoinette preferred to add her to a special group of intimate acquaintances, rather than employ her as a secretary by whom a series of invitations to impossible people might have been sent out.

Barnave, like Mirabeau, began to learn that the Queen lacked the reasonableness, energy, and resolution which he had thought she would display. He admired her courage, she appealed to him in other ways, and he still attempted, in spite of weakening faith, to save her, but he would have despaired if he had seen her letters to Mercy at the end of August: "Our one resource is foreign aid; our fortunes, our lives depend on the Emperor and on him alone. We must now pretend to work with the revolutionists the better to fool them hereafter" — a thought to which she had been and would be far more consistently faithful than the foreigners could believe; and it was still the necessity for caution and adroitness that she saw and which they persistently held as evidence of her duplicity.

When the Austrian Emperor and Prussian King, meeting at Pilnitz, made solemn declaration of agreement to act together if intervention in France proved necessary, and to use whatever forces might be required, the Queen objected: "The powers have the right to oppose certain reforms, but it is also the right of every country to adopt whatever laws it chooses in matters of domestic government." As usual, France did not know she took this stand; which, to be sure, was not her central thought. She disapproved of the apparent equality of influence of Frederick William and Leopold II at Pilnitz, for she had always said: "Beware of Prussia," and she had recently insisted that the Emperor must be the directing force, the highest authority in all questions relative to aiding her.

She returned again to her former plan, the Armed Congress

which she advocated over two years ago and which was based upon her fundamental error, her belief that the French revolutionists could be intimidated. But the foreign powers and the *émigrés* cared not for armed congresses, nor for the new French constitution, and Marie Antoinette could no more easily direct the aid she hoped that other nations would afford her, than control the activity of Barnave.

Again and again she tried to explain her difficulties in letters to Mercy and Fersen apropos of the chief business now on hand, the unavoidable acceptance of the completed constitution, an acceptance against which Burke advised her in the strongest terms. "We are certainly told by the King's brothers to refuse to sanction such a document," she complained, "and we are given to understand that if we do refuse we will receive help. From whom ? I cannot see that the powers are making any serious effort in our behalf. We have no friends. Everyone deserts us through weakness, hatred, or ambition. It is obvious that we have no choice in the matter of the constitution, and that we are blameless in our helplessness. If we refuse, there will be riots, we will be more closely guarded, or murdered by this race of tigers. It would be nobler to refuse, but dare we run the risk ? Perhaps, if we appear to be doing as they wish, the beggars may learn their errors, may even hope for foreign intervention. I may be in the wrong, but I can only tell you what I think, after having listened to arguments on all sides. You know the man with whom I am compelled to deal: the King. Just when one thinks he has made up his mind, a thought, a word, destroys his resolution. You must keep your attachment true to me. I may compromise when necessary, but I will never act unworthily. You may see my whole soul in this letter. Confronted by misfortune, one feels, one knows the strength of one's character. My blood flows in my son's veins, and I hope that he will prove himself to be, in years to come, a worthy grandson of Marie

Thérèse. I need greater courage than a soldier's on the battlefield. Good God! Must I live in such an age as this, among such men as these by whom I am surrounded? For my child's sake I will endure the pain that fills my long career. I no longer see the words I write."

Having at last decided to pronounce a false approval of the constitution, the King informed the Assembly of his good intention, and a deputation from the Salle de Manège walked across the garden to be greeted at the Tuileries by the King who, pointing to his wife and children, simply said: "They share my sentiments," to which the Queen added gracefully her assent. Next day in the gallery of the Salle de Manège she saw them seated while Louis swore his oath of allegiance, made his speech; and though applause appeared to be unanimous, and though the entire Assembly escorted the King back to the Palace where the crowding populace shouted its wild approval, Louis and Marie Antoinette retired to weep. "Ah! Madame, is it for this you came to France, that you should witness my humiliation?" Paris, seeing no cause for tears, spent the remaining weeks of September in rejoicing, holding mass meetings, illuminating the streets, crying, *"Vive le Roi!"* as royalty drove along the Champs-Elysées *en fête,* applauding King and Queen in the theatre, and, finally, hearing the Assembly's exuberant declaration that Louis XVI had brought the revolution to an end. During these weeks, Marie Antoinette was conscious of scattered mutterings loud or low between the shouts of friendliness; and she knew well that enemies of monarchy were regretting that the King's acceptance of the constitution had given him a momentary popularity which they would do their best to shorten, while they thought out means whereby the establishment of a constitutional king might be made to stand for one more step toward the extinction of the power of the crown.

The Queen asked Bertrand de Molleville if the King must

not be faithful to his oath. "Most certainly," he answered. "Then rest assured that he will keep his word and that my hope tells me all may not yet be lost." At other times she expressed her doubts. "Alas! How is it possible to judge accurately so desperate a position as ours?"; and she wrote Fersen: "The French are atrocious on all sides, and none of the Jacobins can be called patriots. Nothing can be gained by the new Assembly, [the legislative, successor to the constituent] a collection of rascals, fools, beasts except a few worthy souls to whom no one pays the least attention. Our private life here in the palace is a hell. My sister Elizabeth is so indiscreet, so greatly influenced by her absent brothers that if we talk we wrangle." Yet Fersen thought she had too great a faith in constitution and constitutionalists. He had heard a rumor, which he did not believe, that Barnave was the Queen's lover; what worried him was Barnave's advice. He sent his protests in proportion to the reverse admonitions of Barnave, and she attempted to calm her dearest friend: "You may be sure that I will never put my trust in madmen, for they horrify me, and all I try to do is to make use of them for my own benefit. We are told the people love us, but I don't believe it. At any rate they don't love me. They are always ready to commit atrocities, and only our obedience or our money wins their temporary favor. We can but go from bad to worse, for the mob is grown accustomed to the spectacle of our dishonor."

Letters continued to be the form of communication between the Queen and Barnave, but she had much desired a conference upon matters impossible to resolve conveniently in writing. After much difficulty the Queen's friends met her once or twice in the palace, but they arrived at no final decisions, and reverted to their correspondence, for gatherings were more dangerous than letters, and they, too, had failed to establish mutual understanding. "I have always been frank with you" — she stuck to her story — "for, as I am naturally outspoken, half

measures do not suit me. Our conduct has been so clear, so straight that we are irreproachable, and no suspicion can reasonably be held against us." Reasonably or not, he answered, royalty is suspect and royalty must work more vigorously. The Queen, assuming the injured air which would, she hoped, give weight to her reiterated innocence, maintained for a time a silence toward Barnave.

This is the place in which to dwell upon her careful plan for the Armed Congress details of which come out in her long series of letters to and from her distant correspondents. She thought the congress should meet at Aix-la-Chapelle or at Cologne or at some other city nearer than Vienna, to discuss the external affairs of France; not, as has been noted, the constitution and the new French laws which should be left to the management of the King, for he was to attend to them when he regained his power. Back of the congress were to stand armed forces which, she hoped, would frighten France, suggest an invasion if the revolutionists persisted in slighting monarchy, and thereby figure in the minds of those Frenchmen who hated the present anarchy as ready help to be summoned at any moment against the extremists. But this congress could not appear to be the King's idea, for that would have made his gestures of constitutional co-operation worthless before sufficient time had elapsed for the said constitution to prove itself unpracticable which, when demonstrated to the nation, would convert the people back again to faith in royalty, convince them that the King's wishes must be granted. Among these was his desire to leave Paris freely, to go to some town near the border, there to assume the rôle of mediator between France and the threatening armed forces of the congress, to gather loyal French troops about him, and, with Austrian or other foreign cohorts, if he should need them, to return triumphantly to Paris just as he had planned to come from Montmédy.

But if before the acceptance of the constitution Marie Antoinette found the powers disinclined to take her congress seriously, she now discovered them to be still more resolutely opposed to it, very distrustful of the King and of herself, exasperatingly indifferent to her incessant explanations that it was impossible for Louis to withhold his pledged allegiance. Her assumption was that other nations wished to see France restored to strength, whereas they only feared that the fall of the French monarchy might lead to other insurrections against other thrones. If they were to conquer France it must be for their own interests, not for Louis' benefit. They thought of France as of another Poland to be partitioned, and they would do no more to help Marie Antoinette than France would do for Mary Stuart when she counted on her native country's aid. Fersen informed the Queen that her brother had no real intention of assisting her, but was merely playing with promises to soothe her into thinking him her champion. She tried to convince Leopold that he would be drawn, sooner or later, into action against France whatever might occur, and that his advantage lay in coming quickly. It would soon be too late for him, and much too late for her.

Meanwhile Barnave pursued her with his usual complaints, telling her that she and Louis were not working vigorously nor steadily enough to win France back to their support; and the distracted Queen, sure that France could never be recovered by her efforts or by Louis'; sure that only Austria could uphold the Bourbon throne, seemed to hear all her letters dinning their entreaties into ears deliberately deaf. The thought of further correspondence sickened her, yet still she wrote, for there could be no rest for her until she found some way to save her son.

There came a moment's brightness exaggerated by surrounding darkness. The King had been requested to sign a decree banishing priests who would not swear allegiance to the civil

constitution of the clergy. Barnave at first advised consent, then, hearing of much opposition to the measure, decided the King might stand his ground, might use his opportunity to show his power to correct the errors of the Assembly. The effect of the veto which, accordingly, the King put upon the bill was so encouraging that Marie Antoinette's waning trust in Barnave waxed strong again, and she went promptly to the theatre in answer to one more of his requests that she show herself to a Parisian audience. And again she noted that applause for her inspired the animosity of her enemies, which endangered her friends; but she could not persuade Barnave that it was useless for her to appear in public.

"Really this Marie Antoinette is too insolent, too vindictive for all patience, and I wish," wrote Mme de Coigny, "that someone might put her in her place, remove her from the King's which she is constantly attempting to usurp." That was the general view of France. This was the foreign comment: "The Queen is losing every opportunity of seizing the reins of government." Thus spoke Mercy; so he spoke, in years that were the prelude to the revolution, on many occasions when he desired that France should serve Austria by means of Marie Antoinette. What ought she to have done? There had been and there was no plan so poor that no one would approve of it. There had been and there was no plan so good that anyone could persuade her to make it the object of her steady, undivided effort. And no particular programme could be made to fit the long succession of contradictory developments.

The flare of favor gained for royalty by accepting the constitution had died down, and with December came new aggravations. The *émigrés,* who had persistently declined to consider the King's wishes and to obey his commands, again refused to follow his directions and to fear his threats, and Marie Antoinette exclaimed: "They will murder and devour

us. Cain! Cain, the elder brother of the King! There is nothing left for us but death!" Her cry became an echo when Robespierre called his former "brothers" traitors to himself. And now the Russian Empress sent a warning: "Woe to the government that trusts in foreign aid!" Woe to us, thought the Queen of France, whatever we may do; and she dispatched her exclamations of distress to Fersen: "Oh! This damned nation! How miserable to be obliged to live in it, to play my dreadful, necessary rôle! Sometimes I can scarcely believe that it is I who do what I do, say what I say, yet all I do or say is unavoidable, and, had I acted otherwise, our difficulties would be still greater than they are. We can at least hope to gain time. What bliss if some day I should be able to show all these creatures that I was not their dupe! I have no moment to myself, there are so many persons to whom I must talk or write. My one consolation is the occasional hour that I spend with my children. When I am most sad I hug my boy; then I am comforted."

The Dauphin, about this time, pretended that he was a knight, and mounted his steed, M. Barré, a captain of the National Guards who transformed himself into a horse by getting down on all fours. A knight must choose a lady, and this knight chose Marie Antoinette; but what faithful followers had he, and if all the National Guardsmen were equestrian forces, would he have found riders for them? What friends he had could do but little good. During these days officers of the guard escorted him to the gardens for his play, and one day they invented a scene in which he was to act a part in a representation of the capture of his father at Varennes. Sometimes they told the Dauphin of the faults of King and Queen, and when Mme de Tourzel heard of this she begged him to believe no word against his parents: a warning which a future terror was to make the child forget. One afternoon when the Queen was in the garden with her son, a crowd insulted her;

she started to return to the palace when the friendly guards on duty asked her to wait, to hear them give an answer to the creatures. *"Vive la famille royale!"* they shouted, drowning the voices of the mob till certain of its members were moved to take off their hats, to change their tone.

Marie Antoinette merely added this instance to other examples of the fickleness of Frenchmen, and she wrote Fersen: "You honor the French too much when you believe them capable of thinking out and following one straight course. They change their minds for the pleasure of the change, and return as promptly to old ideas as they are swift to adopt new ones. I have reason to believe that they are about to declare war, not on a great power — they are too cowardly for that — but on certain German princes whom they think they can defeat. The idiots do not see that in so doing they will serve our interests, for, if they attack one nation, all the others will join against them." And to Mercy she continued her disclosures: "Without money, without an army, without discipline, it is France that wishes to attack! How absurd!" She overlooked the bravery of the threatened action which indicated the fallacy of her theory of intimidation, and she did not see that this game could be played against her quite as easily as in her favor. She wished the King to be forced to declare war because she thought that it would mean defeat for revolutionary France, and it did not occur to her that the King's enemies could twist the King's obedience to the Assembly in so doing into a hidden wish for war which he would pretend to have consistently attempted to avoid. She did not, at this moment, write her brother as she wrote to Fersen and to Mercy; she did not urge him to declare hostility, for she believed that international conflict was about to precipitate itself without his aid; and she decided that the Armed Congress was still the means whereby the Emperor might serve the King of France most advantageously. Therefore, in regard to Aus-

tria she addressed supplementary remarks to Mercy: "I do not complain nor say that if the Emperor had done as I begged him to do some months ago, the congress would have met and our position would not be what it is. He will have to face the censure of the world if he allows his opportunities to escape; if he deserts his sister, nephew, niece."

One day she drove out to Saint-Cloud. It is strange that she should have been permitted such a liberty, considering all the talk of all the sleepless eyes that watched the Tuileries. Yet how could she have managed to receive and write so many letters, to have had an interview with Barnave and his friends, if, ever since the capture at Varennes, the royal family had been guarded absolutely strictly ? Here at Saint-Cloud, however, she told her ladies she had lost that faith in Mercy which she had always been instructed to preserve and of which her correspondence seems to show the clear survival. Likewise she doubted Breteuil whom she had trusted far too long and who said after her death: "I was devoted to Marie Antoinette because she was the daughter of Marie Thérèse to whom I owed this indirect allegiance." The Queen might have told her ladies that she could have confidence in no one but Fersen, and that she sensed a great deficiency in the loyalty of her brother, and that she had found no more than momentary comfort in the course of her negotiations with Barnave whose business with her was now drawing to an end.

One of these momentary comforts was plainly not the question of the flag and of the guards. Barnave had reasonably insisted that the flag of the monarchy and the flag of the nation must be alike, to which the Queen refused her consent, as well as to his idea of changing the personnel of the King's guard to persons whom the people trusted, eliminating those whom the Queen called faithful and therefore obviously suitable. She would not hear of alterations in their uniforms, for the King's guards had always been conspicuous for a color

and a style that had distinguished them from other troops; and, in her mind, the honor of the crown was here involved. Barnave asserted that France and France's King could not cooperate except according to a single code. She could not understand the point; she felt that royalty had been degraded to the limit of endurance and that only baseness would consent to all additional humiliations. Her distrust and dislike of the tricolor was the image of her distrust and dislike of the nation, and Barnave, seeing this at last in all its inevitable significance, voiced his despair: "There is no hope for anyone who hesitates to chose between a uniform and a kingdom." Whereupon to gain time, to keep Barnave a little longer, the Queen said she would see what could be done about the matter, in spite of annoying inconveniences, orders having been issued for new uniforms according to her wish.

And now another no less serious situation demanded the attention of Barnave who had heard that Prussia and Austria, at Russia's instigation, were planning to invade France. "If the King is silent at such a time," he warned Marie Antoinette, "he will stand as inculpated in the Emperor's schemes. Therefore he must hasten to the Assembly, speak with patriotic fervor such as will inspire confidence in his loyalty, place him shoulder to shoulder with the nation. If he should neglect to speak as I have indicated, all will be lost." The Queen could not possibly explain to Barnave the foreign question as she saw it, for her whole view of it involved her double game. But she perceived that he was right as far as Louis was immediately concerned; and Louis adopted Barnave's suggestion. It was too late; opinion was too firmly set against him, and his words struck the ears of France's representative as proofs of his duplicity. They had begun to doubt Barnave himself although they did not know of his negotiations with the Queen. His influence in the Assembly had been for some time losing ground, and he decided that he must abandon Paris

and take leave of Marie Antoinette. "I am sure my head will pay for the efforts I have made in your behalf, but I ask no recompense except to kiss your hand." The Queen extending it, bade this friend farewell, and, as she had seen others, saw this one for the last time through her tears. Thus ended the year, and with it went another faithful follower in close touch with France. Narbonne, the next, would go the way that he had gone; Narbonne, who was to fail as Mirabeau and Barnave failed, to make the monarchy and the nation one. The Queen was thrown more violently than ever upon the desperate resource of foreign aid which, all along, had been the principal stronghold of her wavering confidence.

One day she said: "The only way to be successful is to frighten one's enemies," and now she wrote Mercy: "If the Emperor will place himself at the head of the foreign forces everyone here will tremble, for the insolence of the French is nothing more than fear. We ourselves would run no risk, for we are too useful to these scoundrels for them to dare to do us any harm," meaning that they would fear Europe's anger and revenge. She made an almost naïve and quite surprised complaint: "Everyone accuses me of double dealing." It annoyed her to observe both that this accusation reflected the misunderstandings which she had written page after page to explain away, and also that her efforts to disguise her secret policy from those whose knowledge of it would be dangerous, had been so frequently defective, though, as yet, not altogether vain. She had made the same mistake the Germans made in 1914 — that France can be intimidated into surrender. But although many foreigners were of her opinion, one good friend, the Swedish Gustave III, was sure that there could be no safety for her except flight, and, to induce her to act according to his view, he sent Fersen to confer with her, a journey very terrifying to the Queen who feared the capture of the nobleman.

COLUMBIA, MO.

MARIE ANTOINETTE WITH HER CHILDREN

A portrait by Mme. Vigée Le Brun at Versailles

However, after various delays, he reached Paris in the middle of February, and in the course of a sorrowful meeting in the Tuileries the King said to him: "I know I am accused of weakness, of frequent change of mind, but no one has ever been in a position comparable to mine. I lost my opportunity; I should have left France when the Bastille fell, but at that time I felt I must take Broglie's and Monsieur's advice, and, since then, I have found no possibility of escape, and everyone has now abandoned me. No one, however, should concern himself with my affairs, but leave me to my fate." The Queen was moved by a still deeper sadness, and for the moment she agreed with Louis that to fly was not within his power; and Fersen was forced into conviction by their arguments. She gave him all her correspondence with Barnave to justify herself in Fersen's eyes and also that he might put these letters out of reach of all French enemies. There seemed nothing now to do but say good-bye, and, for the last time, Marie Antoinette embraced the friend whom she had always loved. She might have said to him as did the King: "I, too, am constantly accused of changing, wavering"; but she did not say this, did not need to speak, for Fersen understood her or forgave her even when she failed to act according to his view, and many of her erroneous opinions were also his. If he had known that he could never save her by means of foreign aid, he would have stayed in Paris. He left the Queen to work, as he himself would work, for European intervention in the affairs of France.

As to the mere matter of inconsistency and change, France was as guilty as the monarchy. All who were active in the revolution shifted ground as circumstances dictated. The revolutionists thought Europe had no right to overthrow their government, but they felt it would be more than justifiable to tear down Europe's thrones for the emancipation of other peoples, to give them all the pleasures of a liberty which they

expected to give France, regardless of whether or not all nations had the point of view of Louis' subjects as to the means whereby that freedom might be won.

Soon after Fersen's departure the Queen received a letter from Mercy informing her that the Emperor had at last decided to adopt ideas very similar to hers concerning the Armed Congress if he could get the powers to co-operate; but this conditional obstacle absorbed much time and the Queen noted apprehensively the long succession of explained delays although she heard that Prussia had finally given its consent to Austria's proposals. This hope was destined to short life, for the two best foreign friends of Marie Antoinette — her brother and the King of Sweden, Gustave III — died the next month. The Queen had never seen her nephew, Leopold's successor, Francis II, and she was sure that if Leopold was slow, Francis would be no less deliberate, and, being young, would lack experience, and, probably, a keen interest in the fate of a troublesome aunt.

Therefore she must work the more persistently to bring him to her aid. She could not hear the voice of Vergniaud thundering in the Assembly: "From this place I see the windows of the palace where misleading counsellors forge chains for Louis and will deliver us over into Austrian hands." Was this her purpose ?

The chains that she was forging were not intended for the King; she called on Mercy to help her place them on the troops of revolutionary France: "Dumouriez, convinced that foreign forces are about to advance, is planning an attack in the direction of Savoy, while the army of La Fayette is ordered to march toward Liège. These decisions were reached in council yesterday, and it is well for you to know them, to be on your guard, to take all necessary measures, for it appears that these offensives will be promptly launched." She could not believe that this was treachery to France, for how could a French

army marching against the King's cohorts benefit the King? She misunderstood or did not know the French law passed six months before to the effect that death should be the penalty for giving military secrets to an enemy of France, for in her opinion the enemies of the revolution were the friends of the French King and therefore they were the friends of France. And she could again have quoted for her justification, the fact that in past times the leaders of the French had called on foreign aid in time of need. She had at all events this thought: Who will know that I am writing as I am to foreign friends who will of course destroy my letters to keep them from my enemies, from present fools, and from posterity's curious, uncomprehending gaze, or else surround those letters with such explanation for the future as shall make clear the rightness of my action to those who cannot grasp at once my clear integrity? Those were her calculations, that was her point of honor.

These were France's calculations, this was the national point of honor: Marie Antoinette sent money years ago to Austria. Mme Rochet's flight was toward Austria. France is about to fight Austria. Marie Antoinette has always been, will always be *l'Autrichienne,* the Austrian woman, and with Austria in the coming war her sympathy will indubitably be, and she will work accordingly, indifferent, at best, to France, and probably intent on causing Frenchmen's blood to flow. Here in the palace France had imagined for its own aggravation an "Austrian Committee" grouped around the Queen. The Tuileries might have been a house of glass for all its ostrich secrecy, and France had guessed her guilt as shrewdly as if it had watched over her shoulder her swiftly scratching pen; nor could it have hated her more deeply if she had painted her words to Mercy in enormous advertisement on the palace walls. Frenchmen were certain that they knew exactly why she made so strong a fight for the King's guards. With them

and other traitors she would defend the Tuileries, hold France back until the Emperor had had time to march to Paris. Then she would leave the palace escorted by foreign troops to foreign safety, whereupon the walls of Paris were to crumble under the fire of the enemy.

Fersen had struck many notes of error, and he struck another now: "Do not distress yourself about the Queen. She has lived too long in France and learned too much to place her confidence in any Frenchman." One of the men she would not trust was this Dumouriez whom she had just betrayed. Ten days before her letter he had become minister of foreign affairs, had tried to give her good advice, but she knew that he had had relations with the revolutionists; she suspected him, yet found his information useful, and, four days after sending it to Mercy, dispatched it to Fersen. Again, two months later, she wrote her friend a similar communication full of new secrets, with the encouraging comment that the French army was in the worst condition.

Meanwhile, knowing that on April 20 the King was to declare war on Austria in apparent co-operation with the Assembly's motive, just as she had foreseen, the Queen addressed a prayerful note to Fersen the day before: "God grant that now at last we may be revenged for every outrage we have suffered in this country." Fersen was delighted by the opening prospect of the war's probable result. He was sure that foreign forces would save her, and that he might expect to see her before long. She felt it in her power once again to look forward to La Fayette's discomfiture, and when he came once more to help her escape to different safety, she smiled in sovereign dissimulation, covering her contemptuous refusal with gracious seeming gratitude, hiding her scorn of his futility which greater minds than hers had shared, would share. "Had I been in La Fayette's place," Napoleon was to say, "the throne would have been saved."

Nevertheless, in spite of certain signs of her assurance, she still urged Mercy to be cautious: "It must be made clear that Austria does not propose to make war upon the French nation itself, and that the Emperor does not approve of the plan of the *émigrés*." She meant that it was the revolution, not the welfare of France nor the sum of French possessions, which the foreigners were desirous of reducing. And again she wrote of France's set determination to allow no interference in its internal affairs, a determination which the King could not ignore. She had no grasp of the fact that France would fight for its revolution as bravely as for any other alleged right; no comprehension of a patriotism of which she had seen no example, a patriotism which France itself had only latterly begun to feel and which she, unconsciously, had stimulated while she deadened that old loyalty to kingship which she so ardently attempted to exalt and strengthen. Above all she failed entirely to see that France had violent objections to the armed approach of any foreigner for any reason whatsoever.

She had expected that the French army would show no military genius in execution of the plans which she told Mercy it had made, and she had heard that France's troops had met with a reverse. Then what was this delay of which, presently, she was informed ? Why did not the Austrians march onward into France ? They were not ready, and they had not come with zeal, whereas France was full of ardor, not in the least discouraged by an initial set-back, but resolutely moving from one expedient to another, from hatred to greater hatred of the so-called Austrian Committee in the Tuileries.

At this time the Assembly once again brought forward a decree against non-juring priests knowing that Louis would not sign it, would, therefore, incite his capital to rise against him. That this indirectly incited rebellion might have access to the palace, the Assembly now resolved to demand the King's sanction of the abolition of his guards. Someone rushed to

the Tuileries to tell the Queen that if she could not prevent the King from signing away his sole protection there would be no hope for monarchy. This she believed, but in despair acknowledged her inability to combat his stubborn weakness which, however, by no means satisfied the deputies. It was not enough that the King had given up his guards; he must not only sign the decree against the priests but still another one providing for the establishment at Paris of a camp of twenty thousand volunteers who were in no sense to be at the command of royalty. Dumouriez told Marie Antoinette he must resign his position in the King's council if Louis refused to approve these measures. "Must the King consent to the gathering here of twenty thousand rascals who might kill him ?" asked the astonished Queen. "Do not exaggerate the danger, Madame," replied Dumouriez. He argued with the King whose conscience held him in its grasp. "Sire, if all the French knew you as I know you, our troubles would be at an end. Can you not, however, sacrifice your scruples to the nation ?" "I await my death," replied the King, "and I pardon it in advance." He vetoed the decrees; Dumouriez resigned — Dumouriez whom the Queen had recently betrayed and whom one day she had addressed in jealous pride: "Sir, you are powerful now. Beware ! The people break their idols suddenly." Then, grieved by an implication in Dumouriez' reply that she could be considered capable, in his case, of taking part in popular iconoclasm: "What ! You think that I would ever countenance your assassination ! Alas ! Remember my misfortunes and do not add to them another unjust charge. I do not dare appear at a palace window for there I am met instantly by insulting yells; and if I look into the garden I am sure to see a dreadful sight, a hideous atrocity. What a place and what a people !"

There was no time for further denials, recriminations, or complaints, for, with the news of Dumouriez' resignation and

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MARIE ANTOINETTE

By Mme. Vigée Le Brun, in costume called "Chemise"

of the King's double veto, Paris rose on the clear, warm morning of June 20 to carry a petition against these royal measures to the Assembly, and to plant a "tree of liberty" near the Tuileries as had been done in many squares and public gardens. Paris was not concerned with the fact that on June 20 a year ago the King and Queen set out for Montmédy; nor with any purpose of storming the stronghold of the "Austrian Committee." Paris marched in no warlike mood to the Assembly. The story of this day is the story of a crowd too great for narrow streets. It irritated itself by its own size; it pushed against itself, grew hot under a blazing sun; imagined it was being resisted by another force when its own bulk blocked its progress. Certain drunken individuals communicated their excitation to their sober neighbors by elbow-proddings and imprecations. Lost in a maze of alleys when it left the Salle de Manège, the mob wandered, shoved itself along, into the Tuileries gardens, into the courtyards of the Tuileries. To oppose it was to anger it, and it was furious enough at the fact that hundreds of persons cannot make convenient progress through narrow passageways. Nothing could have been more natural than for someone to look up at the high palace, suggest a visit to the King; for others to agree, venting their peevishness on anyone who opposed them. Confusion filled the courtyard and the court. Thousands of citizens insisted on entering one house at once.

The people knocked at the King's door; they would soon knock it down. "Let them come in !" commanded Louis. The Queen, meanwhile, had been prevented from joining him, had been forced into another room, placed behind a table in the embrasure of a window, surrounded by her ladies, by a group of soldiers and deputies, her daughter by her side, the Dauphin sitting on the table holding his mother's hand. Marie Antoinette was very pale; she gave an outward show of self-possession; her knees trembled. The mob, traversing

the palace, passed through the room, and once or twice the Queen whispered angrily to someone near her: "Really, this is beyond all human patience." She had, before the crowd appeared, been told by Santerre, a commander of the National Guards, that she need not fear the people, for they loved her and the King. "I know," she replied, ignoring his idea, "that I am safe in the protection of your troops." Then, as the procession moved along, a girl approached Marie Antoinette who asked her: "Why do you hate me ? What harm have I done you ?" "None to me, but to the nation." "Poor child," the Queen said kindly, sadly, "you have been deceived. What interest could I have in the misfortunes of the nation ? I will never see my own country again. I must be happy or unhappy here in France, and I was happy when you loved me." The girl, like others in direct communication with the King or Queen, was moved: "Forgive me, I did not know you. I see that you are good." Santerre gave the girl a push. "She is drunk," he told the Queen. Perhaps he thought the nation drunk when, shortly before, he told her majesty that France loved her. Seeing the Dauphin, sweltering in the heat of the afternoon under a red cap which the Queen in obedience to the mob had set upon his head, Santerre allowed Marie Antoinette to take it off. She did so, thanking him, and to her amazement heard him whisper: "Madame, you have friends who love you but who serve you clumsily. I know of others who could be of greater usefulness." Perhaps she now altered her impression of Santerre's meaning when he said: "That girl is drunk." Perhaps he had intended to imply that an insult flung at Marie Antoinette was evidence of intoxication. The Queen shrugged her shoulders; it sickened her to think about Santerre. His words and his intentions could have no more significance than those of any member of the mob.

At last, toward evening, the long, dirty stream of vagabonds had flowed out of the palace, and the reunited family wept in

its own embrace. "Alas!" said Louis to his wife again, "that you should have come so far to be so grievously humiliated!" He discovered that he still wore the red cap which the mob had made him, like the Dauphin, put upon his head. He flung it on the floor; his hair was in disorder; he did not look a king with that cap upon his head, but a good-natured parent making himself ridiculous to please his fretful children. That cap! He could have spit upon it, that cap which Condorcet (in the sentimental language which the eighteenth century called degradation and the nineteenth century regeneration) compared favorably to a crown which Marcus Aurelius would have gladly worn.

Royalty unwillingly received a group of deputies that evening, and heard such tactless, well-intentioned words as these: "You must admit, Madame, that the people have shown themselves kind-hearted here today." Exasperated by the malicious irony she sensed beneath this stupidity, the Queen controlled herself, and replied calmly: "The King and I believe the people to be naturally well disposed toward us except when they have been misled." To another irritating deputy who urged her to admit that she had been terrified: "No, monsieur, I was not; but I suffered much in being separated from the King although I was accomplishing a portion of my duty in being with my children." To still another one, after a cold reply, she turned her back. It is said that with a mockery of smiling graciousness she ushered these Assemblymen into the Dauphin's room and bade her son say: "I love the nation," and that her guests were highly pleased, the simple creatures. Perhaps the Dauphin stored in memory for future use a scene in which his mother made him testify to loyalty apparently in conflict with his parents' cause. At any rate the Queen had satisfied herself that she had made these deputies do honor to her son; and now, returning through the palace she pointed out to them the damages which the mob they

thought so well-behaved had left behind: smashed doors and broken furniture which she could not resist the urge to indicate as proofs of what these men had said. The deputies departed, and Marie Antoinette contemptuously sighed. That evening Mme Roland, who had been received by Marie Antoinette in the bright Versailles days, said rapturously to her friends: "How I wish I might have witnessed the long humiliation of the Queen today ! How deeply her pride must have been wounded !"

Next day came Pétion to the Tuileries to boast of a calm Paris. "That is not true," replied the King incensed at Pétion for having failed to keep it calm the day before, and for presuming thus to lie to him. "Sire," began Pétion again. "Be silent !" sternly interrupted Louis, and thereby caused Marie Antoinette to say in private to a friend: "I fear the King has been too violent. Will not his sharp tone merely serve to turn that man against us ?" Pétion was very popular at this time. It may be that Louis, remembering the almost abject deference which he himself had shown this deputy returning from Varennes, was prompted by that recollection as well as by the present circumstance to show that he could still assert himself when unendurably provoked. But his display of temper failed to impress a people who did not notice the absurdity of a book which compared Pétion to Christ; a people who employed the ludicrous expression *"sans-culotte* Jesus," and gave credulous ear to such prophetic utterances as: "We shall be a race of gods !" Therefore the King succeeded only in making Pétion his implacable foe, just as the Queen feared, but just as she herself, on many similar occasions, had made enemies.

After June 20, as when she returned a year ago from Varennes, Marie Antoinette wrote Fersen: "I exist, but it is a miracle, for the day was frightful. It is no longer my life alone which the people wish to take, but the King's also."

And, after June 20, as before that day, the King was heavily oppressed by the conviction that he had not long to live, that he must wait calmly, resignedly for the thrust of an assassin's knife, but that in some inexplicable way his death would save his wife and children. He read and reread the life of Charles I, drew comfort from the conclusion that he himself had done nothing which could justify his being brought to trial like the English king; a premise from which he argued that he would not be so arraigned. This soothed him with the thought that such a blot would not be dropped upon a page already none too spotless in the history of France. Thus he found a new comfort in the very hopelessness of his position in which still, as always, his main strength was his religious faith.

The Queen continued to send French military secrets to her dearest friend, and to feel, now that June 20 was safely past, and with a hope still strong that foreign aid would come, a sense of something like security, fitful and sometimes broken, none the less, by the distressing restlessness of Paris. A German friend had won her admiration by his bravery of profferred yet unprofitable aid, and Marie Thérèse's daughter wrote: "I am more than ever proud of being a German." The beginning of July which was to seal her doom seemed to her so full of promise as to inspire this letter to Fersen: "I feel a courage that tells me we shall soon be safe, and by this thought I am upheld."

Yet in the Assembly the eloquence of Vergniaud attacked the failing power of the throne; and as a military measure, a summoning of volunteers to be prepared for war, the deputies declared: "The country is in danger!" A wild and intense conflict between two main forces filled July and the first nine days of August — the forces of loyalty to the crown on the part of a small devoted group, and the great energy of an aroused nation arming itself against a foreign foe in league,

as France believed, with the French monarchy. More than a hint of this impending struggle invaded the Queen's mind, and in that letter, after sounding the note of confidence, she added: "Something must be done that shall intimidate our enemies. There is no time to lose." Thus she wrote on July 3.

Fersen had written her at the end of June: "Whatever you do, be sure to make no attempt to leave Paris. It will be easy for the invading forces to reach and rescue you, and this is Brunswick's aim. He will precede his entrance by a stern manifesto making all France and particularly Paris absolutely responsible for the lives of the royal family." Fersen had felt that this proclamation must be the immediate forerunner of invasion, for, otherwise, there would be time for the revolutionists to turn against their majesties, and herein he unconsciously denied the principle of intimidation. He thought the manifesto, like a trumpet call heralding the instant coming of the foe, must rather draw all Frenchmen away from Paris to the borders, there to fight too desperately for remembrance of King and Queen behind them in the Tuileries.

Had Marie Antoinette received Fersen's letter of June 30 before she wrote as we have seen to Fersen on July 3, and, as follows, to Mercy on July 4? "All will be lost if the revolutionists are not frightened by a threatened punishment. The Assembly should be held responsible for the lives of King and Queen." In other words, was it *her* idea or Fersen's or Mercy's that this responsibility should be made clear? Heretofore, in advocating the Armed Congress, she had been careful to note the danger that direct invasion would constitute for royalty; she had preferred the gathered, stationary threat which, giving France a choice between obedience and punishment, might prompt the revolutionists to adopt a cautious policy, whereas a definite declaration of war might easily unite all France against an enemy which offered only violence.

Had she now a greater confidence in foreign forces than she had then, a greater scorn for Paris in view of her escape on June the twentieth ? Or did she think her situation now so desperate that to risk a great revolt were better than to waste a moment's time ? It may perhaps have been the Queen who put the thought in Mercy's mind, for in Fersen's diary the ninth of July bears this entry: "Saw Mercy. The Queen has asked him to see to it that the manifesto shall render Paris responsible for her life and the King's." And on this same day Mercy wrote to Marie Antoinette: "Within a month you will be free." And one finds evidence of her own confidence, for one night this month she stood with Mme Campan at a window of the palace and looked out over the garden to the sky: "When that moon shines again we'll have our liberty !" Yet still these hopeful moments alternated with her fear, for when someone, arguing for flight, asked her this question: "Do you know that here are people capable of locking you behind the Tower walls ?" the Queen replied: "Would to God we were there now !" — meaning of course the only "tower" in Paris, the Temple Tower, where her friends might hold their ground more firmly than at the Tuileries which was not so good a fortress for defence; might ward off Paris till the foreign forces came.

The old idea of flight, the subject of so many arguments, was again brought forward at this time. Fersen, as we have seen, had written to her, June 30, against all thought of possible escape, yet in his diary on July 9, after talking with Mercy, he amended his statement in this way: "Fly only if the means are absolutely sure" — a truism on which he and Mercy had agreed, but to which the Queen could obviously answer: What certainty of this sort can ever be within our grasp ? The friends of royalty in France denied the truth of this resourcelessness. They thought, moreover, that even a dangerous adventure must be undertaken; that, if flight failed, there could

be no hope. They did not know of the Queen's correspondence, therefore they were ignorant of the basis of her confidence which, if called to their attention, would have seemed to them absurd. They found their closest reasoning of no avail, for Louis had promised on returning from Varennes that he would never try again to leave the capital; but, as he was weak in all but a religious resolution, he would perhaps have given a tardy and a different consent had it not been for Marie Antoinette.

The duc de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, wise counsellor, high in the King's esteem, was convinced that only wildest tricks of most improbable mischance could prevent him from arranging a safe journey to Rouen which was, however, a less loyal city than he thought. Marie Antoinette knew nothing about Normandy, but she suspected Liancourt, nor had he ever cared especially for her. His clear, enlightened efforts had all been for the King, and for the family incidentally. The Queen succeeded in blocking this attempt; and Louis, much as he trusted the duke, was not sure of the success of this undertaking. Moreover, the expedition to Varennes had been laboriously planned only to fail. Louis again imagined that he had carefully considered everything, and his conclusions were his wife's. Mme de Stael had another scheme for their escape, but hers seemed doubtful too, although, as Marie Antoinette might have known, this lady was her friend. As for a final project, sponsored by La Fayette, there was no chance for it. Fersen had advised the Queen: "If you decide to fly, do not entrust yourself in any case to La Fayette." She was again ungracious in the presence of patient Blondinet; and she gave Mme de Stael a cool reception which, however, may not have been intentional. Feeling that the time was being wasted in discussing futile plans, the Queen neglected to be patient; and although she did not make Mme de Stael her enemy, her attitude was added to the sum of grievances which

others held against her. It may be that flight could not have led to safety at this time; but it appears that after the fall of Versailles there could have been no safety for the King and Queen in France.

Marie Antoinette's continued letters to Fersen present the strangest mixture of important information and trivial details. She revealed new military secrets, then took the time and space to ask him if he had received the gloves she sent. She said that she was doing all she could to watch his interests, to invest his money, while admitting that to keep up with all the changes in the financial situation was almost as difficult as to know the latest developments in the French political world. Even as late as August 1 when Paris was rising visibly to fling itself upon the Tuileries, the Queen still wrote Fersen of investments, of her efforts to rent his houses for him. Thus, even now, she still found time to help her friends, guided in part by the eager readiness which had always brought her to their aid, but partly, too, for the sake of momentary diversion which relieved the steady strain of weary struggles in her own behalf.

The King and Queen attended on July 14 another Feast of Federation, the saddest of all ceremonies: scarcely a shout of *"Vive le Roi!"* or *"Vive la Reine!"* but cries of "Long live virtuous Pétion!" in abundance, and, for the ears of Marie Antoinette, *"A bas l'Autrichienne!"* to make her face express still deeper suffering, still sharper humiliation in contrast to the brilliance of an elaborate costume, the last appearance of her majesty in the rôle of Queen in an incongruous play incongruously staged on wooden structures on the Champ de Mars, surrounded by a mob instead of smoothly gliding over marble floors, by gilded mirrors, escorted by a courtly company.

Back to the Tuileries to watch and wait, imprisoned in this restless, discontented city ready to break at any moment into

action. The Queen was waiting for a shot or for a sound of trumpets to announce arriving forces which should set her free; Paris was waiting for a shot or sound from that same source, threatening all Frenchmen. The Assembly which, before June 20, had deprived the King of the municipal guard which it had granted him three months before, decided that the throne was still too safe, and, by a decree of July 17, the Swiss troops were sent away, but, luckily, not far.

On July 18, Fersen wrote the Queen that work upon the manifesto was progressing chiefly at the hands of M. de Limon, one of the *émigrés* with whom the Swedish count expressed his satisfaction. The document was submitted to a host of approving exiles including Calonne whose approbation was a warning unknown or unobserved by the French monarchy's immediate entourage, and, strangely, causing Fersen no misgivings. Although the Queen had wished that the Assembly might be made responsible for the safety of her family she did not so express herself at first and her earlier letters lead one to assume that even the desperation of these days between June 20 and August 10 would not have made her sanction the announcement that "Paris shall be put to fire and sword if the royal family be harmed." This statement was incorporated in the text of the manifesto. There was not time for her to pass upon the document, and she was frantic for all speed, and wrote Fersen July 24: "Tell Mercy that our lives are in the greatest danger, that a day's delay may cause incalculable horrors, that the manifesto must be sent at once, that it will surely rally many persons round the King, that otherwise no one can say what may happen, for the number of assassins is increasing every day."

Of this she was particularly certain in view of the fact that, four days before, the Tuileries had been threatened with a much more dangerous invasion than that which had occurred on June the twentieth. It was averted at the last moment by

Pétion solely for the reason that he wished to wait till volunteers advancing from the south could enter Paris and make the planned attack upon the palace proportionately more formidable. That night the King and Queen, having no adequate forces for the Tuileries' defence, and in the expectation that the mob would come at any moment, had thought of retreating to the Assembly. The Queen could not have agreed to this surrender for lack of any other hiding-place, for, later on, she did not suggest a secret corner of the basement of the Tuileries where, Fersen had said, she might await in safety the arrival of her friends. She had for a moment consented to appeal to the Assembly only because she had not yet had time to summon forces to defend the palace.

Now the manifesto hurled its ultimatum: Paris must obey the foreigner or be destroyed. The Queen listened for a cry of fear. But Paris, raging, demanded instant action both against the foreigners at the northern border and against their cohorts in the Tuileries. The Queen shuddered, but held up her head. And now arrived the soldiers for whom Pétion had been waiting, and, on August 1, Marie Antoinette sent her last agonized appeal to Fersen, the last letter he received from her: "The coming of the Marseilles troops greatly increases our apprehensions. They have even been granted admission to the Tuileries gardens; and there is no longer any need for secrecy in the minds of those who plan our deaths. Even the Assembly hesitates only as to the method by which this purpose can best be accomplished. I told you in my last letter how important it is to gain twenty-four hours' time and now I tell you once again: if help does not arrive, only Providence can save the King and his family."

Thus she was convinced that the Assembly which was to tremble at the thought of taking royal lives had added all its weight to the temerity of Paris. She knew that the men from Marseilles picked quarrels with the faithful Filles-Saint-

Thomas section of the National Guards, and when, as those provincials probably foresaw, some of their own victims were killed or wounded, responsibility was flung against the Tuileries as having incited the Filles-Saint-Thomas troops to commence hostilities, while all harm done to these defensive forces was scornfully ignored by Paris. The Queen's anger gave her courage a new strength.

When the King on August 3 announced formally in the Assembly the Duke of Brunswick's Manifesto, an ominous silence answered him, as if the deputies were thinking: "You know much more about this than you will admit." That night the clouds, as if in league with Brunswick whom they had outdistanced, thundered over Paris which their lightnings struck. But Paris defied another enemy, and hoped its fire might fall upon the Tuileries. Patriotic voices roared as if in mocking chorus with the skies, while the storm lighted streets down which impatient citizens rushed to meeting-places to demand immediate battle. Leaders of insurrection urged delay till organization, already under way, should be complete; and the Assembly, ignored by self-reliant Paris and confused as if by a vague consciousness of its approaching end, argued, hesitated, knew not what to do.

The Swiss guards were not far off, and no one prevented their being summoned, eight hundred strong, back to their posts to join two hundred personal friends of monarchy and the usual battalion of the National Guards which the Assembly, in spite of all its counter-measures, had not withdrawn, just at the moment when the palace had greatest need of it. Therefore a number in the neighborhood of a thousand men had been set up between the royal family and all Paris reinforced by troops of patriots from the provinces. Thus on the night of August 9 the opposing forces stood prepared. Paris and the palace waited sleeplessly for dawn and battle. Paris

had said: "If the King is not dethroned today, the Tuileries shall fall tomorrow."

Inspiring and instructing untrained troops, there is a great new force created by the revolution — *La Patrie*. It is new indeed, for, even in the seventeenth century, patriotism was mainly known as loyalty to the King. In the succeeding years it gradually grew, achieved great progress at the Bastille's fall, and sprang to full maturity when France began to clearly see new meanings in those later months of foreign menace. It has even penetrated the sterile recesses of the mind of Louis XVI, but in the form of helplessness, kind-heartedness, limited by his consciousness of legitimate tradition. Least of all can it be comprehended by the Dauphin's mother whose greatest hope and widest vision is that her son shall be the King in years to come. She would not, in consideration of the virtues of this new patriotism, excuse its faults. But, on the other hand, France will excuse a Frenchman for his crime if by some act or expressed thought however crude, however brutal, he can be called a patriot by reason of bravery and devotion to the general will. In the days of Versailles' life one could successfully be a fop on these conditions: to have a name, to entertain. Now one may be a cut-throat or a fool — no matter, if one be a patriot, and a patriot may be merely one who yells approval of the execution of a man who cannot be proved to be a traitor but who is suspect, or suspect of being suspect.

But who would argue as to scruples in a time of crisis ? If a criminal can save a nation, that nation must not die for lack of the support of an untainted virtue. And it is far safer to kill all traitors and, incidentally, an occasional harmless victim, than to let many traitors go because not all of them can by full legal processes be condemned. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity — these great achievements cannot be won except by Patriot-

ism; and Patriotism may sometimes find it necessary to employ slavery, special privilege, and hatred; to move backward in order to advance.

Until the spring of this last year of monarchy, this new patriotism, in its noblest inspirations, had found no adequate expression. Then one mad night of feverish excitation in distant Strasbourg at a banquet, someone urging action for which all are eager, cries: *"Allons!"* — no more, but that one word creates a song. There is present one Rouget de Lisle who rushes from the room, writes at a stroke both words and music, rushes back again and sings: *"Allons, enfants de la Patrie!"* The company has gathered round him and has learned his song. All Strasbourg sings it, and it travels over France where certain faiths have died and where a new one has been born — *"amour sacré de la Patrie"* — and where, in imitation of its predecessors, it will spread happiness and misery, comfort and cruelty. It will save France, which present monarchy cannot do. The sound of this song comes through the open windows of a room in Marseilles where another banquet is in progress; and all Marseilles in unison now sings the song that has become *La Marseillaise.* At this moment volunteers are gathering to march from France's southern border up to Paris; they need a marching song and they have made this one their own. They leave Marseilles just as the Queen is sending from the Tuileries most desperate calls for foreign aid. All through July the Marseillais march singing *La Marseillaise,* and, when they reach the capital, the news of Brunswick's Manifesto has stirred all citizens within the walls of Paris; but Brunswick's troops have not yet reached the gates.

The Marseillais have easy access to the gardens that flank the palace of the Tuileries, and here they gather, and still they sing their song, the sound of which is heard by King and Queen to whom these words in these men's mouths might be either undecipherable hieroglyphics or nonsense clear and unmistak-

able. *"Amour sacré de la Patrie !"* Only fools, they think, could sing that phrase expressing love of crowned, anointed King and at the same time march against him. But the Marseillais are certain that no King can have a "sacred love of his country" who has tried to flee from it, who has had friendly understandings with its foes. It might have passed for love to do these things in days of feudal darkness and oppression, but for such autocracy the time is gone. Now France has credulous, indomitable faith in liberty, equality, fraternity, and a new patriotism which can overthrow a throne whereon the King has sat serenely talking nonsense, paying highly for it, ignoring the miseries of the realm, encouraging first the expensive frivolity and now the deliberate treachery of a foreigner — the Austrian woman.

CHAPTER X

THE BATTLE

Oh Rois! Exercez hardiment votre puissance. Elle est divine. Vous êtes des Dieux!"

— Bossuet

ALL THAT NIGHT the Tuileries waited sleeplessly. Through the open windows came at midnight the sound of the tocsin ringing in all the churches of the capital, mingled with the roll of drums calling the citizens to arms. Between three and four o'clock Mme Elizabeth, looking at the first dim light of dawn, summoned Marie Antoinette who sat thinking of the battle on which the sun would glare: the battle which would decide between her and the revolution; and she was deep in thoughts that trembled in a fear shot through with hope. She stood, walked over to the window, watched the fading night, and, with her sister by her side, saw the sun rise in a red blaze, heard a shot fired in the courtyard. "It will not be the last," she grimly said.

Early in the morning she moved from room to room inspiring the defenders and representatives of monarchy by energetically spoken words. There were brave friends who asked the Queen to touch their weapons, believing that this charm could cause them to prevail. Some asked to kiss her hand, a privilege which, they felt, would soften by remembrance of this contact the hard reality which fate might make of death. They raised the Dauphin in their arms, and in his name resolved on victory.

There were still those who had no hope except in flight, but Louis XVI still declined to go, and Marie Antoinette was

sure the sun that she had seen so brilliant in the eastern sky would set in equal radiance, flashing against the western windows of the palace, towering triumphant in the midst of an humiliated Paris. At six o'clock, Mandat, commander of the Tuileries, was summoned to the Hôtel de Ville. It was his folly to obey, his fate to die. Meanwhile the King, accompanied by Marie Antoinette, passed in review the men whose ardor was not cooled by his unkingly face and dress. When he went to inspect the soldiers at the outer palace posts the Queen presented him with a pistol. "This is the moment to reveal yourself!" she said majestically in tones that should have thrilled a king. Old maréchal de Mailly kneeling drew his sword, swore to defend the descendant of Henry IV; but Louis' eyes were red and sleepy; he looked as if he had worn those clothes all night, had not arranged his hair when he got up, had not observed that he was wearing violet: the color of the monarchy in mourning. Some of the soldiers shouted: *"Vive la Nation!"* and he replied, cleverly but ineffectually: "Yes, the nation and your King are one and indivisible"; and, as he shuffled on, the guardsmen asked themselves, just as the Flanders troops asked that last afternoon before the palace of Versailles: "Shall we fight for such a King?" But now they dared to laugh. Louis was amazed to hear a brutal cry as if in answer to that question: "Down with the fat pig!" and none too hearty cheers of *"Vive le Roi!"* drowned in the louder chorus. "Death or dethronement!" The King was running a gauntlet of extremest ridicule instead of rousing every memory of royal glory; and when, despairingly, he puffed back into the palace, still more bedraggled and forlorn than when he left his room, he saw his wife who had been watching him with eyes as red as the sunrise she had seen, her cheeks red too, in dark wide circles wet with tears.

Nevertheless, once more she pulled herself together for the battle. She told the men about her they must fight now

for the common cause, their own as well as monarchy's; a cause that had sustained a staggering stroke in Mandat's death, and in the further news that cannon placed to guard the bridges near the Tuileries had by municipal command been turned and pointed at the palace they were to have defended.

To augment her anguish now came Roederer suggesting that the King surrender, seek safety in the Assembly. To go there had been considered a few days ago by Marie Antoinette, but there had not been then as there were now a thousand men standing between crown and capital. "You wish to deliver the King over to his enemy," she said sarcastically. "Rather," Roederer replied, "to save him from his foes." "But," she impatiently retorted, "there are brave men here; and the time has come when we must know, once and for all, who is master: King and constitution or the rabble." Roederer was doubtful whether the Tuileries lacking plan and discipline, especially in Mandat's absence, could defend itself; but she, ignoring proudly his main point, assured him: "These men will obey orders and fight faithfully." She had no trust in Roederer, sure of his connections with certain revolutionary leaders. He could not be the King's friend who bade the King lay down arms. Someone took her side: "If Louis XVI goes to the Assembly he is lost." Moreover, the King did not think a formidable force was coming to attack him. Now another person joined in the argument. "Silence!" commanded Marie Antoinette, "You have no right to speak before us in this place." She turned her back in anger to this man, and her majestic face to Roederer, flatly declining to depart. She called on all to act as witnesses, to hear her now address two officers: "Give me your word of honor to nail me to these walls rather than to permit my base retreat." Still Roederer insisted, and the Queen, throwing herself at the King's feet, implored him not to give up all that they had fought so long to win, the future of the future King, the only

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Drawn in the Tuileries in 1791

From a private collection

comfort that their lives could any longer hope to hold, the honor of the crown, the courage without which a King must be contemptible. Her face and neck were red, the muscles drawn and twisted by the agony of her distress, the consciousness that it were better to die nobly here than to accept a shelter that would be shame today and death tomorrow but a death deserved. Moreover there was still hope: the foreigners must be near. If only King and Queen could hold their fortress for an hour there would be victory before another and a final night. Louis might have listened longer, might have yielded had not Roederer thought of the one word that could have silenced Marie Antoinette: "You'll be responsible for your children's lives if you stay here, for, Madame, I insist, all Paris marches on the Tuileries." The Queen regaining calmness now replied: "Would that I might be the only victim!" She could not condemn her children to a certain death. "There is no time to lose," persistently continued Roederer, "in five minutes it may be too late." "Let us go," compliant Louis said; and Mme Elizabeth asked Roederer: "Do you answer for the King's life?" "I will answer for it with my own."

To the Queen's mind, now centred on her children's mere existence, not on her son's crown, it occurred that in the Assembly the foreigners might find them quite as easily as in the Tuileries. Yet there was also in her consciousness an appalling sense of futile weakness. "What can we do? The King has willed to go. But we will return!" she said encouragingly to friends aghast at this incredible resolution of helplessness. They did not chiefly blame the Queen, for she had fought to fight; but some of her small group of friends, disgusted, broke their swords while others resolved to encounter all the citizens of Paris for a cowardly and absent King, and to ply Swiss Guards with exhortations and champagne. Marie Antoinette, too depressed, exhausted to reproach

Louis, might have said as another Queen once cried to another feeble King: "You'd do well to weep like a woman for a kingdom you have failed to preserve like a man!" Marie Thérèse's daughter would have preferred to hear the Sun King's great-great-grandson sword in hand, eyes flashing through despair, calling like Charles I at Naseby: "Gentlemen, one more charge!" But no one followed Charles. Would men enough have followed Louis? "If he had mounted his horse the victory would have been his," said an inconspicuous observer of this August 10, the future Emperor of France. So slovenly a King victorious? If he had made a charge . . . had led his soldiers . . . but he was poor Louis, not a conqueror.

The slow exodus of royalty, the last but one of many funeral processions of a still existing King and Queen, left the Tuileries at nine, with soldiers in protecting walls on either side. After Louis came Marie Antoinette holding the Dauphin's hand, then Mme Elizabeth with Mme Royale followed by the duchesse de Tourzel supporting the princesse de Lamballe more nervous than the others, convinced that she would never see the Tuileries again. The King's face was sad, serene; the Queen, wiping her eyes, tried to maintain a show of dignified composure, and replied to an encouraging National Guardsmen: "I do not fear." It had been said some days ago: "The monarchy will not outlast the leaves this year"; and as the King saw them on the ground he said: "They've fallen at an early time," and heard behind him the Dauphin kicking them. The royal family walked in silence across the garden to the steps of the Manège where for ten minutes the crowd refused to give way, crying: "Down with veto! Do not let him enter the Assembly," adding vociferous objections to the admission of the ladies, particularly Marie Antoinette. Roederer harangued the mob through which, at last, the guardsmen made a path. The Queen was for a mo-

ment terrified, seeing the Dauphin lifted to a soldier's shoulders, but she was quickly reassured that this meant safety for her son. Mme Royale, so soon to be subjected to still greater horrors, was more frightened at this moment of entering the Manège than at any future time, for, though the crowd had been pushed back, it roared more violently than ever while the refugees moved forward into the Assembly-room and took their places near the President to whom the King said: "I have come here to prevent a great crime, thinking that my family and myself could nowhere be safer than here among the nation's representatives where I propose to spend the day."

But the Assembly remembered that a new, popular etiquette decreed that deputies could not deliberate in such immediate presence of the King. Deliberation was the breath of the Assembly's life. Therefore the prisoners were ignominiously removed to a kind of cage ten feet square, open to the Assembly on one side, and to the full heat and glare of the sun reflected from the white-washed walls so low in this logographe or box for newspaper reporters that none but children could stand erect; so small that there was scarcely room for all these persons to sit down. With King and family here, the Assembly still deliberated in their presence, but felt that it had covered up its inconsistency by the disgrace of their position.

Here in the cage already blisteringly hot two hours before noon, the Queen heard the first shot of the battle from which she had been forced to flee. She listened anxiously but with hope, for she could not believe an untrained mob could conquer disciplined Swiss troops and loyal monarchists who would hold out until the foreign forces should have come. She did not know how the battle began; she thought it must have been the revolutionists who fired the first shot, or, if they did not, it was their fault that others were provoked to start hostilities which Paris had initiated by marching against the

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palace. Her lips were tightly pressed together, her hands clasped on her knee, her cheeks red, her dry eyes staring straight, as if through walls and across gardens to the scene in which her life was desperately at stake, and where she seemed to see herself returning in proud triumph to a righteous victory. But the King, hearing that first shot, wrote an order for the Swiss to lay down arms, gave it to an officer who delayed delivery until convinced that all was lost and further fighting futile, when, to command surrender, was, in effect a signal for the mob to massacre the friends of monarchy; and, as Louis' perverse fate so often operated, this measure and its intention to prevent bloodshed were unknown to Frenchmen who decided that their King had ordered them, his subjects, to be ruthlessly shot down.

In the first moment of the battle, the Queen had said exultingly to a nearby friend who had, not long before, advised another royal flight: "You see, we have done well to stay in Paris!" And then too soon for credibility, yet sounding in her ears no less distinctly than the roar outside, she heard the deputies demanding the dethronement of the King. But still with head held high and lip curled scornfully she listened hour by hour to petitions passed against prerogatives, her face soaked in tears and perspiration, her hands wiping her son's wet face with a borrowed handkerchief stained with blood of luckless valiance shed in his defence. The thunder of the battle made the Dauphin cry, and Marie Antoinette said to the deputies who noticed his distress: "My son shares my anxiety in thinking of those whom we have left behind us in the palace." Blood-stained ruffians entered the Assembly with ghastly trophies and boastful pride describing insurrectionary prowess.

Toward evening when massacre had lessened, there was the glare of conflagration for the Queen's tired eyes which she had thought should rest upon a peaceful palace, sovereign, saved.

All day she had eaten nothing, had only swallowed a little water and seen a shameful sight: the hungry King devouring a piece of chicken. She did not know what strange scenes the conquered palace had presented: she could only picture slaughter. She did not know that in her room a man named Singuier had sat at her clavecin playing *La Marseillaise* where she had played the tunes of Trianon; that the new national hymn had for a moment stopped the breakers-up of furniture who gathered round the pianist to dance and sing the song that moved all France. She did not know that soon after her departure her ladies had chosen to remain together in one room, had closed the shutters, lit the candles, and sat calmly waiting in strange artificial brilliance on a sunny day, a ghostly tableau of the forgotten grandeur of Versailles, in the hope that brigands breaking in might be so dazzled as to hesitate to murder all these actresses upon this stage. The brigands came, broke down the door at which they had been violently knocking, which had not opened to them. It was as if this remnant of an ancient world, deaf to the new and living age, could be unconscious of its actual existence, though it had howled and roared as if to wake the dead. An order had been issued that no woman should be murdered, and a Marseillais escorted certain members of this group out of the palace to a temporary safety. The others had been spared, for even revolutionists will sometimes obey a command not to kill. So the women went; and, when night fell, the candles were put out.

But no one, French or foreign, came to rescue Marie Antoinette from the Assembly's cage till after midnight when the family was ushered across a corner of the garden, where the light of accompanying torches revealed the bloody pikes of hooting, cursing rioters, to four dingy rooms (with whitewashed walls and uneven floors of ancient brick) for two years uninhabited in the Convent of the Feuillants close to the

Manège — a crowning irony for the Queen who had all day dreamed of a return to a palatial residence, of the sound of invading foreigners, not these demands of Frenchmen for her head; not of this mob still crushing in the earliest hours of another day against a force which kept them still precariously at bay, but could not drive them off. "What has she done to all these enemies ?" wondered the King. But there were cries for his head too, for Mme Elizabeth's, and threats to kill the Dauphin, if a reaction in his favor should occur that night.

As a reward for having been "so brave all day, so near such wicked men," the child was happy in permission to sleep in his mother's miserable room, after a tardy supper served for all, and for which only he and his sister had had appetite. His mother could not sleep. She had rushed into the King's room in a fierce need to hold someone, anyone responsible for the disasters of the day, and she had made a wild complaint: "Those Marseillais should have been attacked early in the morning !" "By whom ?" asked Louis, quietly; whereupon she fled without a word back to her bed and threw herself upon it in the deepest bitterness of humiliation, sorrow, anger, and despair, increased by nervous exhaustion. She had talked to friends, had said that she had been betrayed by all, even by the foreigners who had profited by the dissensions which had turned France upside down; she had bewailed the fact that those whom monarchy had bribed kept money and broke promises; "and it will all end with us," she had lugubriously concluded, "this beautiful kingdom which we have tried so hard to keep for our poor children."

Friends with the King had no doubt spoken still again of flight, but how and where to go ? The King, like Marie Antoinette, now felt himself devoid of all intelligent support, but without bitterness he said: "Charles I had more friends than we." Friends such as they had brought what small temporary comforts could still be provided: money which

Louis said he did not need; articles of apparel welcome after a hot day. The Queen had literally nothing with her but the dress she wore: her purse and watch were snatched away while she walked through the garden of the Tuileries.

At six o'clock she sank exhausted for an hour into a feverish, restless unconsciousness, and awakened wearily to all the immediate miseries of the dreary room and to the deeper horror of her helplessness. Actually she was ill, yet forced to spend another day in the hot cage, imprisoned there by prisoners, for the Assembly itself was now the captive of the Commune, the new embodiment of the will of Paris which was to allow the present body of deputies only another month in which to talk. It forbade the Assembly to assign the royal family to the palace of the Luxembourg for fear of secret corridors of escape, but ordered that its lodging place should be the high black Temple Tower. At this announcement Marie Antoinette put her hands before her eyes. "I have always dreaded that dark place," she whispered to the children's governess. "A thousand times I begged Artois to pull it down, as if I had foreseen this day." Another and still heavier blow now struck her — the decree suspending the King's executive functions, and the passing in her presence of the measure which definitely, as threatened yesterday, dethroned him. She closed her eyes a moment. Then, as at a future time, the prelude to the end of all her woes, she raised in indomitable majesty her weary head.

At two o'clock the prisoners were conducted to a room where they were served in privacy a plentiful repast which was for them no less a needed sustenance than a moment's freedom from the insults hurled at them or solemnly pronounced in other places in the building. Then they were hastily herded back again into the logographe to listen all afternoon to the Assembly's insolence.

The friends who stayed with Louis the night before were

sent away that evening; and again the King observed that Charles I was happier than he in having had devoted followers about him even at the scaffold. Again the family crossed the torch-lit courtyard, and the Queen replied with silent scorn to a young ruffian who yelled, "Infamous Antoinette! You wished the Austrians to bathe in our blood, and you will pay for your intentions with your head!"

The dreary agony dragged on monotonously through August 12; and then, at last, toward evening of the following day there was a change and for the worse: a carriage came to take the captives to the Temple. As Marie Antoinette stepped in, she noticed that her foot had broken through her shoe, and she remarked: "Who would have thought a Queen of France could ever be so destitute?"

Again, with the same company as on the return from Varennes, Pétion sat in the coach; but Barnave was no longer by the side of Marie Antoinette, and Pétion had not learned to love the royal family. He kept his hat upon his head, a municipal order having been issued that there should be: "Death for him whose head is bare when Louis passes by." The customary insults were shrieked in all the streets: "Down with the pig! Down with the Austrian Traitress!" Crossing the Place Vendôme the King saw the statue of his great-great-grandfather lying on the ground, and one of the officials in the carriage said: "This is the way the people treat a King!" "God grant," said Louis XVI, "that they exercise their wrath exclusively upon inanimate objects."

Slowly along the boulevards the coach crawled and turned where Marie Antoinette had often turned with Artois and his friends into a street that led to his Temple Palace illuminated now as if for such a fête as the King's brother had repeatedly provided for the Queen. Lights were hanging in the garden; and the great salon, into which the royal captives were unceremoniously led, blazed ironically, its candles burning as if

to reveal each line of sorrow in each outraged face for the delight of the unseemly persons present. Municipal officials, with their hats upon their heads, gazed at the curious sight, and made crude comments which they mistook for wit, while ill-dressed, unwashed creatures sprawled on sofas, stood on chairs in an incongruous circle round a table set in splendor on which was served an elaborate supper. But the debased and miserable prisoners had no appetite, and thereby they were saved the last indignity: enjoyment and acceptance of mock hospitality, here in this place in which, three years ago, the thought of such a gathering would have seemed the most extravagant impossibility; where Marie Antoinette had never dreamed of coming except in sovereign liberty, in highest state, and even as a patroness of him whose word was law in this high hall. He was the second nobleman and prince of France, but he had run ingloriously away, and he was still too weak to come back, to drive out this mob.

Suddenly someone snatched up the sleeping Dauphin, hurried him away, followed closely by his helpless relatives through inner and then outer passageways which brought them to the Temple courtyard, to the small tower rising darkly next the taller one which Marie Antoinette had often seen in black thick outline through the windows of a brightly lighted room. She had walked through the Temple of Artois, and left behind her all but one palace of the Kings of France.

A former kitchen, small and very dirty, was assigned to the King's sister; a narrow hallway between the Queen's and children's rooms, to the princesse de Lamballe, in contrast intentionally striking to the brilliant salon in the palace where these ladies sat at table a moment ago. The Queen had said: "Whatever these monsters do to me, they cannot make me bow my head," which statement, known, caused doorways to be lowered that she might be forced to stoop in order to pass through.

Thus ended the Queen's last battle. But the foreigners might still come to rescue her here where she would be perhaps as safe as in the Tuileries, or in the Assembly's cage. She still had hope though every hope had left her disillusioned, year by year, day by day, since that rainy morning almost three years ago when she had sat for the last time in the grotto of her garden. She had survived a thousand dangers, and might escape as many more. For by waiting, watching, hoping she might yet live to raise her son to the recovered eminence of France's throne.

CHAPTER XI

THE CAPTIVE

To feed on hope, to pine with feare and sorrow.

— SPENSER

DANGER in large letters on a huge black flag waved its warning over the Hôtel de Ville and on another banner over Notre Dame, for Paris had been declared in danger, and danger still threatened Paris from the north. But no sign of peril marked the Temple where Philip the Fair crushed noblemen's ambitions many centuries ago, and where his successor now sat waiting, helpless, surrounded by the hatred of the capital. The government was not concerned as to the safety of the King, the Queen, the royal children, except to hope they might escape assassins in order to be publicly cut off under the eye and by the will of France.

The largest and most comfortable room in the small Tower on the second floor, with blue and white walls and an extra bed for Mme Royale, had been allotted to the Queen. Nearby, in the Dauphin's room was stationed Mme de Tourzel. The King was quartered on the third floor where he turned indecent pictures to the wall so that his daughter should not see them. A noisy guard-room adjoined Mme Elizabeth's kitchen; and all the family as well as all the guards used the only toilet that the Tower provided. The library on the ground floor contained fifteen hundred volumes of which, during his imprisonment, the King perused a sixth. This was his chief pastime; the Queen's to sew and to embroider. The King was no longer addressed as *Sire,* or *Majesté,* but as Louis, or, absurdly, as Capet, considering that the Capetian

Kings were strong in ancient days of feudalism. The Queen was called la Dame Capet as, in the Fronde, Anne of Austria was Dame Anne; but this was Louis XIII's wife's most insolent nick-name, whereas la Dame Capet was the mildest of all references to Marie Antoinette.

The King rose at six and read till nine when he breakfasted with his family in the Queen's room. During the morning he taught his son geography, Latin, and French classics particularly Corneille, Racine; while the Queen gave her daughter music, drawing, and Bible lessons under the ever present eyes of guards. She and her ladies changed from costumes of white dimity and white lawn caps to brown linen dresses — such a rich variety of garments having been provided for them by the municipal government — in which they walked in the courtyard until two, watching the Dauphin play, observing the rapid rise of new walls, the clearing away of old buildings, the cutting of trees near the Great Tower, the digging of a wide ditch, and other undertakings planned to make escape impossible. These lugubrious proceedings were accompanied by insults hurled at peaceful captives. One of the guards named Rocher, knowing that the King disliked the smell of pipe-smoke took care to blow it in his face whenever he went by; and when Marie Antoinette, returning from a walk, entered the small tower and climbed the winding stairway to her room, she often heard the song:

Madame à sa tour monte,
Ne sait quand reviendra . . .

One day a guard addressed her: "The *émigrés* are captured; if you are patriotic you'll rejoice." The Queen disdained to answer. Sometimes, however, jailers were friendly, prisoners responsive, and conversation could for several minutes be pleasantly kept up, turned by the King to favorite geograph-

ical topics, or made to provoke smiles or laughter by the gaiety of Marie Antoinette, or to inspire respect by her kindness and her dignity. But much more frequently the captives ready to be gracious received a sudden snub. "Where is your home ?" the Queen asked smilingly one day, to hear a soldier's significantly military retort: *"La Patrie."* Then sorrowfully, almost mechanically, as if it were a bitter lesson that she had been forced to learn and could not quite forget the foreign Queen replied: *"La Patrie:* that is France."

At two o'clock was served an excellent meal of many courses, always in the presence of the guards, sometimes with the addition of Santerre, associated with the horrors of June 20. Sometimes Louis, never Marie Antoinette consented to speak to him. After dinner the King and Queen played cards untill his majesty retired for a nap when his wife sewed or read aloud. At eight the Dauphin had his supper; then his mother helped him into bed and heard his prayers. At nine the family supped; immediately afterward the King went to his room and read till midnight while the Queen sat thinking of her absent friends, her weary life, the courage that she needed to live patiently between the two extremes of boredom and of danger; and wondering why the foreign forces were so long in coming.

The Commune had allowed the royal family and their friends a *valet de chambre* named Hue, but, as one man cannot do everything for so many people, the King had asked for more servants and was granted one Tison and wife, devoted to the revolution, and one Cléry who had formerly been in the Dauphin's service and who was still, like Hue, devoted to the prisoners. The children had found pleasure in the companionship of their governess' daughter Pauline de Tourzel only to find, after a week, that she was to be taken from them. It was the apparent policy of the Commune to give its captives time enough to adjust themselves to given conditions, then to alter

these arrangements by a system of gradually increasing deprivations with the affliction of atrocities or irritations to set nerves on edge in a variety of ways. The order, now, was for all but members of the royal family to go. The Queen, in parting, said to Mme de Tourzel: "Watch Lamballe carefully, and when there is talking to be done, do it yourself; save her from the embarrassment of answering dangerous questions." The princess was still subject to nervous agitation which her experiences had increased, especially the terrors of the tenth of August; and she might do herself great injury through lack not of courage but of presence of mind. She would, however, be safe under the protection of kind, strong Mme de Tourzel. The Queen, assuming permanence in this support, neglected, as she so often did, to picture all the ingenuity of the revolution in devising separations.

This assumed sufficiency of evil not only to one day but to ensuing weeks, sometimes increased, sometimes lessened pain. It strengthened patience in the hope of peace; it sharpened the knife that struck unexpectedly. She watched the Dauphin playing in the courtyard, not thinking of a government that might take him from her. And yet these prisoners' lives, with or without the strain of borrowed care, were far too closely watched for all but momentary, rarest gaiety, for such a performance as that with which the Czar and the Czarina, a century and a quarter later on, contrived six months before their deaths to shorten dreary hours of captivity: a little play for Nicholas II's birthday, produced by imperial players at whose work the Emperor's diary records that he laughed happily.

Still the Queen wondered what delayed the foreigners. There came a rumor that Brunswick might yet arrive, and gradually the news grew more alarming to all in Paris but the royalists. Rocher, approaching Louis, said to him with threatening wavings of his sword: "If Brunswick does come, I will kill you !" And again Paris howled as in the night of

August 10: "The Dauphin must die if France's enemies prevail." Newspapers were kept sedulously from royal eyes except for one that printed in conspicuous letters: "Tremble, tyrant! The guillotine is permanently set up!" A further measure of intimidation disposed of the King's sword, always so useless to him, but an honor and a comfort hanging by his side, and now no longer apt to trip him up when he could not take long ceremonious walks. He had never used an opportunity for self-defence; he only felt the point of honor in the tradition that the King should wear a sword. Vainly he protested, then, once again resigned himself to patience.

Marie Antoinette, never resigned, had none the less her cautious moments, and when she heard the news of Brunswick's advance, she said to Hue: "Above all things there must be no dismemberment of France. We prefer indefinite imprisonment to the loss of a single stronghold, Strasbourg, for example, which somehow might be tempted to go over to the German coalition. This must at all costs be prevented, for the supreme importance is the interest of France." Her voice echoed only in the narrow Temple. It was too late to win France by words. And she had not learned the lesson of the tenth of August — that foreigners could not save her from the French.

Some such answer as September massacres to the reiterated foreign threat was naturally to be expected; and again the prisoners were warned that though the tocsin sounded the news that the invaders were at Verdun's gates, and though all Frenchmen might be massacred, the first to die would be the King of France. He was, for the present, deprived of Hue who had not disguised his interest in the inhabitants of the Tower.

After a noisy sleepless night it was decreed the morning of September 3 that there should be no walk in Temple courtyard for the prisoners that day. In the afternoon at three

o'clock they heard the howling mob that surged toward the Tower to rage at a tricolored ribbon, an emblem it dared not ignore, stretched across the door expressing a strange but patriotic government's decree. The King and Queen were playing cards when a guardsman requested them to appear at a window to prove to the crowd outside that they had not escaped. The King looked out. Upon a pile of rubbish stood a man holding up a pike on which was stuck the bleeding neck, the pale, washed face, the hair arranged in fashionable coiffure of the princesse de Lamballe. He hastened to keep back the Queen, but either she had seen or guessed, for suddenly she fell fainting to the floor. She might have heard the cry: "If the Austrian woman does not show herself we'll climb her Tower, make her kiss the face of her dead friend." She did not know that Collot d'Herbois wished to serve the head upon a covered platter for the Queen's dinner-table. When she recovered consciousness she heard the mob still roaring; and she spent a sleepless night, thinking of Mme de Lamballe's devotion, of the apparent fact that loyalty to the Queen of France was fated to receive no better recompense than this, and of the possibility that she herself might one day die as her friend had died.

Three weeks later she sat sewing, the King reading when they heard a shouting in the street: "The monarchy has been abolished! *Vive la République!*" Her needle moved uninterruptedly, her face retained all its serenity; his eyes remained upon the printed page upon which, perhaps, some incident in Charles I's destiny had seemed to sound an echo in the King of France's ears. Neither he nor Marie Antoinette remembered the mill of Valmy which they passed, once in hope, once in despair a year ago, with no idea it would soon mark a great event in France's history. They only knew that one more foreign effort had gone wrong; they only heard the exultant shouting in the street; they did not know that the

Assembly was no more, that the Convention thus celebrated its birth by a decree that made France a republic. They were not to hear the sympathetic cheering in America, ungrateful for the King's aid not quite twenty years ago. The memory of republicans was to be no longer than the memory of Kings.

The Queen sat sadly in the Tower surrounded by the gaiety of Paris, for Paris grew astonishingly gay, on all sides of the Tower. It invented toy guillotines as America would soon be doing; made ear-rings, brooches in the form of "national razors"; watched children who occasionally imitated the inquisition by carrying on sticks the heads of cats that had been tried, found guilty, executed.

Marie Antoinette's only comfort was that she still lived with her family. Surely her enemies had taken from her all they could except for pens, ink, paper, pencils, other trifles soon to go but not to satisfy insatiable animosity.

September which began by murdering Mme de Lamballe had not yet ended when a decree removed the King to his new quarters in the Great Tower, at last ready, and where a fresh coat of paint offended his nostrils if he were not too absorbed by the sorrow of needless separation to notice little things. The Queen could neither sleep nor eat that day and night. Next morning she was allowed to have her breakfast with the King; and the Convention, to add to other miseries a series of farewells, permitted the prisoners to take their meals together, which had been their request. The ladies were so happy in the first reunion that an unfriendly guard remarked: "I fear these wicked women will make me weep." There was an air almost of feasting, almost of gaiety at this prison repast. The Queen had not always been in love with this queer King, but she had had her last moment of impatience with him, the last of many on that night of August 10 when in the distraction of despair, she had rushed to fling a false responsibility on him. Now she had been softened by adversity, had learned

to feel for him a pity and a kindness which time had moulded into what may pass for love, the reality of which she had not known until the day when he was taken from her. Now she knew it well, and cherished it in their remaining days together.

After three October weeks, she and the children and the King's sister were moved to their new quarters in the Great Tower where they continued to dine with Louis, and, at least, to spend the nights under his roof. Then this small comfort of a common shelter was offset by a decree which transferred the Dauphin from his mother's to his father's care — a measure which could only serve to cause the Queen unnecessary pain. She could see her son for a few hours every day, and at least the family was still to a certain extent together, and their lives seemed at last to have been definitely arranged, for all this time it had been known to them that they were to remain in the lesser tower only until the larger had been renovated. The guards were now on the first floor, King and Dauphin on the second in a large room containing fireplace and stove but only one narrow window that pierced the thick wall. The Queen and ladies occupied the third floor, and the fourth was empty. The entire prison guard at various stations in the enclosure of the Temple, amounted to about three hundred men; and yet, as in the Tuileries, it is remarkable that although the captives were so closely watched, a certain sequence of communications did exist with friends outside, and it was even possible to discuss in writing the plans for an escape.

November's chill had settled over Paris and the enemies of royalty grew colder still. Drouet, well-remembered instrument of destiny at Varennes, was sent to make inspections, to ask ironically if his victims had particular complaints. The Queen shuddered, would not speak; the King said he would always be content encircled by his family — a dangerous thread

on which to hang his satisfaction openly. Next day, the first of her last year, her thirty-eighth, a crowd conveyed to Marie Antoinette its greetings in the form of a desire that she die at once. Six days later, at Jemappes, fell a young soldier in the French army victorious over Austrians. He was once a dirty child upon a road leading to Versailles when a gilded coach had picked him up and flashed away with him the adopted son of the childless Queen of France by whose command he had been washed, well dressed, made comfortable and homesick, ready to seek revenge. He had now found it. The Queen's adopted son was dead; her first son and second daughter were in their graves; and she could not take proper care of her surviving boy and girl, nor keep the Dauphin from the King this month when the child had a cold which every member of the family caught.

Meanwhile a new decree declared that the French republic was fighting to free all nations from all kings. Then, in the usual alteration of great miseries and trivial annoyances came an order that all knives were to be taken from the prisoners. "Do you not also want our needles ?" the Queen asked scornfully. "They, too, are sharp."

And now the prisoners were struck by the heaviest blow since that of August 10: the King was to be brought to trial. He had been but two weeks in the small tower when the Jacobins raised the cry: "Let Louis and Antoinette be judged: it is the people's will." Pictures were drawn of Louis "spitting in a sack." On December 11 the King was playing cards with the Dauphin who said impatiently: "Sixteen is my unlucky number in this game with you." Louis XVI was taken that afternoon to the Convention and his trial began. Marie Antoinette broke her habitual silence to the guards in vain. They told her nothing, and she could not see the King when he remounted the Tower that evening, nor could she sleep nor would she go to bed nor let her daughter or her sister stay with

her. The Dauphin had been sent up to her room to increase Louis' loneliness. She put her son to sleep in her bed, the only one her room provided. Next day his cot was brought because the King, faced with the bleak alternative of relinquishing his son or of depriving Marie Antoinette of seeing the child throughout the period of the trial, had chosen isolation. In neither case could he have seen his wife nor could she have seen him; and so the family spent Christmas day in separate cells. On the first day of the new year and of the King's last month only formal greetings could be carried from him to his family, from his family to him, by a municipal messenger. Two weeks later, Louis was judged guilty; and three days afterward, he read alone, for the last time, a description of the death of Charles I. Marie Antoinette knew on the twentieth that her husband was to die next day, and on that evening the family was reunited for an hour.

The only comfort that Louis XVI could provide for Marie Antoinette was a carafe of water. She came into his room holding the Dauphin's hand, followed by her daughter and the sister of the King. They saw him sadly altered by these six lonely weeks. They rushed into his arms, he wept for them and they for him and for each other, while, for some moments, none of them could speak. The guards peered through the doors, and even at this moment the prisoners were conscious of invaded privacy. The King confided to the Dauphin his last wishes, his religious exhortations, and exacted a promise that the boy would never seek revenge for his father's death. The Queen entreated the King to let her stay with him that night, but Louis had no power to grant what he could not wish, for he now needed to be alone in order to prepare himself for death. She clutched his hand, she clasped her son who clung to both his parents, while Mme Elizabeth and her niece pressed close. The King embraced them all, and the

abandoned family drooped mournfully over its own ruin; and the guards gazed through the glass; and the great black Tower choked in thick walls the sounds of grief, and stood a silent monument in the cold darkness of the night. The King said, "I promise to see you at eight tomorrow morning." "You promise!" his family bore witness. "Why not at seven?" urged Marie Antoinette. "Well, then, at seven. Now good-bye." The guards heard louder sobbing than before; the king's daughter fainted, her aunt supported her, and her father clung to all of them with strongest tenderness. "Adieu, adieu" — he tore himself away, retired to another room. The Queen in strange, melodramatic exaltation moved with her children and her sister out and up the stairs crying wildly at the guards: "You are villains, all of you!" and, in her room, while Mme Elizabeth, kneeling, threw her arms about her, implored her to control herself, to be resigned, to pray, the Queen gave way to bitterest lamentations.

Then, calm and comfortless, she put her son to bed, and said to him: "Promise once again that you will never seek revenge" — as if he, poor child, might ever have that opportunity. He made a sleepy promise, and his mother threw herself fully clothed upon her bed, to lie there in cold, trembling consciousness all night until, at six o'clock, hearing a sound, she started: Is it the King? It was a municipal intruder who said he came to get a prayer-book for the consolation of the condemned. She threw herself down again and listened breathlessly. There were strange sounds in Paris streets but none that she was waiting, praying, to hear. It was past seven and he had not come as he had promised. No doubt those ruffians would not let him leave his room. Still she waited for him, still hoping that it might not be too late, not knowing he had thought it far too great a strain for her, too great a strain for him, to undergo one more farewell. He had thought only of the courage they both needed. He had

spoken of her in the night, shown an understanding of her difficulties and of how, of why, she had so often been unwise: partly because she spent those early years at the court of his grandfather who had never helped or guided anyone to any wisdom.

The dark cold morning soon brought light enough to tell the Queen that it was now too late: the King would never come. Yet still she listened, heard the sound of horses' feet, of coach-wheels coming for the King, then taking him away. She listened till the shoutings in the street conveyed to her beyond all doubt that he was dead. And then a numbing, stony calmness stared through her dry eyes for which, as well as for the dead, her sister and her daughter wept, while the Dauphin cried in panic to the guards: "Let me go ! Let me go to beg the people to spare my father ! In God's name, let me go !"

The long cold hours dragged across the Queen's stunned but still tortured consciousness that twenty-first of January on which, twenty-three years ago, she had received her wedding-ring; on which eleven years ago she had gone to Paris to celebrate the birth of her first son who died when the revolution had only just begun. What would become of these two remaining children ? What would become of her who, ever since that last day at Versailles, had felt her only safety in the presence with her of the King ? Her sister trembled, seeing an awful pity in the Queen's eyes fixed upon her child, the King of France. She knew she could do nothing for her son, and that he could do nothing for his mother here where his father had been helpless. "The Dauphin has now reached the age at which his brother died at Meudon," observed Marie Antoinette. "Happy are the members of our house who die in infancy."

For days she was indifferent to life, to death, to everything except her children at whom she gazed speechlessly for hours

at a time. Perhaps she would go mad, her sister thought. She now wore mourning for the King of France whose son, the King, wore mourning for his father as the Convention had permitted them to do and provided the materials. She would no longer walk in Temple courtyard, for she could not bear to pass the door of the King's room. But the Dauphin needed exercise and she obtained the privilege of taking him up to the platform at the top of the Tower, in spite of which his health declined. Her daughter, too, was ill; but she could not believe that that poor courtyard might mean recovery for anyone, nor would she send her children there without her.

Paris, quickly gay again, forgetful of the dead King and of the little King, its prisoner, played in the shadow of the guillotine. Life was too short to waste in mournfulness except beneath the Tower roof. Europe had been conventionally shocked by Louis' death; but Austria, Prussia, Russia were too busy with the periodical partition of Polish spoils to bother about lost causes. Fersen wrote: "Poor Queen! Why cannot I save her with my life? I can do nothing for her, yet the thought that monsters may destroy her drives me mad."

There was a clavecin in the Tower, long out of tune but of which, two months ago, the Commune, in a moment of indifference, had allowed adjustment at the Queen's request, that she might use it for her daughter's music lessons. On this instrument she picked out the melody of the incomprehensible hymn *La Marseillaise*. She had a copy of another song — "The Queen of France" — to which she referred as a note of change, of irrecoverable time. Now the Dauphin, assisted by his mother, wrote a poem in memory of his father, which someone set to music. He sang, his sister played the accompaniment, her mother sat beside her, her aunt stood close by, and the dreary Temple echoed a small voice and tinkling harmony.

There were many plots to save the Queen. Signs, codes,

signals, even occasional letters continued to elude the guards. When someone whispered to her some months ago: "Beaumarchais might help," her face had fallen. "Alas! He has it in his power rather to avenge old wrongs than to return favors," for she supposed that he would have forgotten the performance of the *Barber* at Trianon, the kindness she had shown him at that time, but that he would remember royal opposition to his *Figaro;* therefore she would not appeal to him. The King had talked to Abbé Edgeworth about a plan for her escape after his execution, but it came to nothing. Fersen now continued to urge foreign co-operation in a scheme for her escape, but this had never been a popular idea abroad, for foreigners were bent on conquest if on anything. When Dumouriez turned traitor to the French republic, Fersen felt that he might make Marie Antoinette regent, but the Queen's past experience of Dumouriez led her to question his fidelity. He tried and failed to induce the *émigrés* to work with him. They said Monsieur, not Marie Antoinette, should be the regent; and, before long, Dumouriez, abandoned by his army, abandoned his attempts to set up royalty; and desperate Fersen arrived at a futile and a false conclusion: "We can only be of service by doing nothing for the Queen."

As to the Austrian relatives of Marie Antoinette, however, it is not surprising that they hesitated, found it difficult to aid the captives, for all the European nations have always been in danger of each other. The various ambitions of Catherine of Russia, Frederick of Prussia, Joseph of Austria, Gustave of Sweden had been enough to keep all countries busy forming or executing plans defensive or offensive. Moreover, it would not have been just to cause thousands of Austrians to shed blood to rescue the Emperor of Austria's sister, a lady who had been most unwise, and had not been of special service to her native country. But it was natural for Marie Antoinette to think these sacrifices justified, and for the Austrians to call

them tyranny; and it was remarkable that the foreigners attacked France even as vigorously as they did.

The baron de Batz, more capable and resourceful than others, and actuated by unquestionable zeal and also by love of adventure, managed to constitute an entire guard of friends to be on duty at the Temple on a night when the three princesses were to escape in military uniforms, the Dauphin to pass with them unobserved. Then, just as the time approached, Paris, hearing that the Austrians had entered Liège, closed its barriers more tightly and thereby made necessary a postponement of the flight. Planned again, the baron's plot was revealed to the Assembly by an anonymous letter. Then it was suggested that the Queen escape alone, to which at first she gave consent; but, on the evening before she was to go, she put her children to bed, talked about them to her sister, realized all at once that there could be no happiness for her in their absence, and she wrote her friend: "We have dreamed a lovely dream and that is all," except her words of gratitude. One Michonis, who called himself republican asserted that he would give his life to save the royal family; and Thomas Paine, the champion of the *Rights of Man,* is said to have worked for the Queen's escape, just as he spoke in favor of the pardon of the King. Another man advocated the possible exchange of Marie Antoinette for other prisoners; a Mme Atkyns offered to change clothes with her, to stay here in her stead, a sacrifice which the Queen graciously declined to let her make. The wife of Tison who had betrayed a number of secrets, now went mad, begged the Queen's pardon, received it and many kindnesses from Marie Antoinette.

One day the widow of the King was brought the ring, seal, locks of hair which he had left for her and which she sent for safety to Monsieur and to Artois, with notes expressive of forgetfulness of all their misunderstandings and infidelities. Memories of the nearby Temple Palace may have made her for

a moment overlook the dark foreground of the Tower. Or, in her still deepening misery, even unfriendly relatives seemed dear, for they were linked with memories of the past.

Hébert came one night to search the prisoners, snatching the sleeping Dauphin from his bed, letting his mother hold the child only that his hands might be free to examine all the room in which his futile anger found nothing of importance. This was her life which, now so black, was to take on a darker hue beyond the limits of her stretched imagination.

Since his father's death, the Dauphin had been his mother's only happiness; he had softened that deep, harsh bitterness which the King's death had caused, had seemed to have made permanent. She had tried to laugh with her son, but when he was not looking at her she saw him always, sad or gay, through a dark veil of sorrow and of apprehension. She read to this eight-year-old King the story of the Kings of France, and listened to his little comments. She treated him almost unconsciously, yet as markedly as she dared, as if he were the King. At table he sat upon a cushion on a higher chair than those of his poor court of forlorn ladies, and this elevation was not the result, in the Queen's mind, of a child's necessity, but the requirement of a throne. In other years his health, which she had compared to that of a young peasant, had been her pride, but now in May he was not well and she could not at first procure a doctor, for no one but her sister and her daughter would believe that he was ill. At last a physician came, the child's condition soon improved but he did not recover all of his good health and Marie Antoinette was certain that he required her constant care, that he would never regain his strength without her ministrations in spite of which her son remained infirm, and she thought desperately of all he needed. If only she could take him out to Meudon where the climate had been of benefit to Bourbons; if only she could do anything but dress, undress, and feed him in a prison. Mean-

STEPHENS COLLE
COLUMBIA, MO

PORTRAIT DRAWN IN THE CONCIERGERIE

By Kucharsky in 1793

while her sister and her daughter felt that they had two invalids in charge, a King and Queen; and thus the hours were shortened by the busy ingenuity of their care of both and by her care of him.

The Reign of Terror had begun in Paris all around the Temple walls. Terror, not too absorbed by all the other business of its kingdom, invaded the great Tower; and on July 3, partly to punish captives for encouraging conspirators, a decree was passed with reference to the dead King's son. He was now more interesting than ever when men still true to monarchy regarded him as King. There might be insurrections, troublesome enough in times of peace, now all the more potentially disastrous for a nation surrounded by all the enemies it could handle and, perhaps, by more. Uprisings for the purpose of making this small boy another tyrant should be crushed before their birth. Yet what could Terror do? Bloodiest revolutionists might approve the murder of the Child of France, but the majority of citizens were less cruel. Murders, however, are of many kinds; some are slow, indirect, and undiscoverable under the hand of a secret executioner: neglect. But it is difficult to neglect a child whose mother watches him at every moment.

Therefore in accordance with the decree of July 3, six deputies appeared before the Queen, her sister, and her daughter, and, pointing to the sleeping Dauphin, announced that he must go away with them. Pale, trembling, and incredulous, the Queen rose. This thing was beyond her wildest dream of tyranny; she could not believe these men. "To take my children from me? No! It is impossible." Terrified, Mme Royale stood beside her mother. Apprehensively Mme Elizabeth watched the Queen's face. "Sirs," began Marie Antoinette again, "the Commune cannot intend to deprive my son of my essential care." Her voice was desperately held in control; the men replied coldly, and the Queen cried out: "I cannot

permit this. In the name of Heaven do not commit this dreadful cruelty." She stood with her sister and her daughter in front of her son's bed, as if at once to beg for mercy, and, if refused, to fight. But the men pulled down the curtain of the bed: the Dauphin, waking, screamed: "Mama ! Mama ! Do not leave me !" She snatched him up and held him tightly locked in trembling arms while Mme Elizabeth implored delay; but the deputies replied: "We did not come to fight or talk with women, and we'll call the guard immediately if any further resistance is kept up to the law's demands." "Can you not wait at any rate till morning ?" she again entreated, "or can you not promise us at least that the child shall be brought back to us for a little while each day ?" Then Marie Antoinette with sudden hope added to her sister's words: "Promise me that I may see him when he has his meals. This request was granted when the King was taken from me. Surely you cannot refuse." Ironically they advised her not to worry; and then angrily: "What of *our* sons who are being killed by soldiers whom you, Marie Antoinette, have summoned against France ? Are we not separated from them ? Do we see them every day ?" The Queen calmly answered: "My son is still too young to fight for his country, but some day, if God will, I hope he would be proud to give his life for France." This was not the last time she found that cleverness and truth did not weaken opposition, but only served to increase hatred. "If you do not immediately and peaceably give up your son we will take him from you by force, or, if necessary, he shall die." Now, just as on the morning of August 10, nearly a year ago, the Queen's resolution broke when she was faced with the sacrifice of her children's lives. It would have been better for her son to die than to exist surrounded by these creatures, yet she could not act on this conviction, but upon a hope she did not feel.

Paler than she had ever been, her face haggard, stiff with

dread, the Queen began hastily, as if to ward off a blow, to dress her son. Then quickly sensing here a chance for safe delay, she complicated every motion, found obstacles in every detail of each garment, yet to an eye practised in observing her, it was apparent she could do all this in less than half the time, for her fingers were dextrous, and they served a double purpose, finding opportunity for a caress in the performance of each duty. Never before had these poor simple clothes seemed so deplorably simple as they seemed now. Never since she left Versailles had she so wished for every detail of elaborate etiquette which bored her always when she was subject to it; but all its length could not have made long enough this strangest of all *levers* of a King. His sister and his aunt did all they could to help his mother to delay, while the impatient deputies had just enough of kindness not to seize the boy and take him as he was. At last in spite of every ingenuity the child was dressed, and, fearing for his life, his mother no longer held him but for one solemn word of parting which her courage, overtaking her initial lack of self-control and with the help of strangely calming fear, had just the strength to make her speak. She placed him before her, put her hands upon his shoulders, fixed her eyes on his: "My child, we must part. Always remember God, always remember your mother who loves you and your father who blesses you." She pressed cold lips against his forehead, and rising led him slowly, gently toward his jailers. But he in terror turned, clutched at her skirts as if to shake her hard-won self-possession, and begged her to save him. She had just the power of will which only fear for him could give her, to tell him he must go; whereupon the men remarked that he no longer needed to obey her who had taught him only evil. He called his mother wildly, struggling as they dragged him out into the darkness down the stone stairway. Now the last door of the Queen's life was shut against her; the released violence of

despair was shaking, tearing her, but could add no torture greater than that hour in which she had reached the summit of her agony. Yet her torture was to be intensified by something still unknown to her but of which the guardians of her son would not leave her long in ignorance.

She saw him at a distance now and then, once in the courtyard calling her, then silenced by a guard. She begged her jailers to let her hold him for a moment in her arms, but she was silenced when she called for him, as he was silenced when she heard him call. Then she discovered in the wall of her room a crack through which she could watch him climb the stairway to the Tower roof where he was taken for a while each day, but not at a fixed hour. Therefore, not knowing at what moment he might pass, she sat hour by hour looking through the crack; and when his feet had gone up out of sight and she had noted with a microscopic curiosity each sign of his condition in his face and dress and manner — a scrutiny devoid of comfort — she followed him to the top of the Tower where, through another opening in the partition, she gazed at him again. He was no longer dressed as she had dressed him in mourning for his father but in colors which had not made him gay, nor was his face flushed with health or shame. Not only did she think him ill, but saw him terrified, threatened, and insulted by his jailers; and at once the plan on which his isolation had been built presented a definite picture in her mind. She was convinced that he was to be deprived of every royal memory, cowed and bullied into a factitious republicanism, neglected until illness slowly killed him; or else to lead a nameless, cruel, lonely, and degrading life. Her son, the King, was to be a pauper not even kindly treated as paupers sometimes are, but starved of every attribute of birth, of heritage, of health, of mind, of soul. He was to be a monster, a degenerate, a sulking rat snarled at by dogs from which he had no refuge and whom he would not have the courage,

when at bay, to fight. The Queen moved slowly down again into her room, to live there with this vision, night and day. "I have no longer any interest in anything. God has abandoned me. I dare not pray."

The Commune, as if knowing her condition, as if further molestations could but be distractions from consummate misery, left her almost forgotten in the Tower during the remainder of July. Then, in case she might by that time have grown accustomed to a torture thereby lessened, and with the excuse that foreigners were conquering Valenciennes, for which predicament Paris held her responsible and subject righteously to further punishment, there was a knocking at her door the night of August 1. "Sirs," answered Mme Elizabeth, "I shall only open when my sister shall have finished dressing." When she was ready, the Queen stood silent, outwardly unmoved during the reading of a new decree that she was to be taken from these two remaining members of her family. "I am prepared to go," she calmly said. The officials examined her purse and "pockets," furious at finding nothing of importance, but they determined to make much of trifles, souvenirs, poor relics which they took with them to be brought out before the tribunal. To foolish questions the Queen replied disdainfully while her daughter wept, and while her sister's face expressed sorrow and contempt in thinking of the pretentiousness of France, a nation that had been turned upside down and now waved its authoritative feet in air. She asked to be allowed to share the new imprisonment of Marie Antoinette, a favor which the municipals took pleasure in refusing. The Queen exhorted her daughter to be brave, to trust her aunt, to find all comfort in religion. She kissed and embraced them and then started down the stairs thinking of the Dauphin whom she had watched climbing them so often these last weeks and whom she might never see again. She thought of the dead King whose door she must

pass by. What good came of her resolutions ? She was forced to break them all, except the resolution to be brave. Suddenly she returned to the astonished, almost hopeful ladies. She came only for her widow's veil, and, with it, she went down again; and, as she left the Tower by the low doorway she struck her head against the stone cross-piece. "Are you hurt ?" asked someone. "No," she answered, "nothing can hurt me now." She stepped into a wretched public hack which carried her through the hot night to the Conciergerie.

The first light of day gleamed faintly when she arrived at her last prison, once the palace of the Kings of France. Her face was wet with perspiration when, to her amazement, she entered a low, dark cell on the ground floor, the moist walls, the wet brick pavement below the level of the outer court; and here the chill of bad air cooled her cheeks. With a hasty glance she noticed in the miserable room a table, two straw-bottomed chairs and one of the armed variety but of cheap material to match the others; a willow-work basket, a wooden box for powder, a tin for pomade, a common cot, straw mattress, a torn, woolen comforter and coarse grey sheets. Two gendarmes were to guard her night and day, and, for a time, there was a waiting-woman in attendance.

The Queen climbed upon a stool to hang her watch from a nail above her bed. A servant-girl, Rosalie, who, with her mistress Mme Richard, wife of the concierge of the Conciergerie, had escorted Marie Antoinette and who now, seeing her majesty beginning to undress, offered her help. "Thank you, my girl, I always do these things myself, having for some time had no maid." The Queen threw herself upon her bed; the women went away and closed the door.

In the morning the Queen of France watched her jailers playing cards. She had beside her watch no other ornaments except two rings, and these she twisted, turned upon her fingers, changing them from one to another, thinking of the

days when, for her white hands which were still beautiful, she had had more rings than space for them on her long, slender fingers. These two last trinkets and her watch which she had brought with her to France were promptly taken from her. She had no sewing with which to pass the hours, but she pulled threads from her coverlet and with two tooth-picks knitted a garter for her son.

The days grew shorter, she had no lamp or candle, therefore, soon after sunset there was nothing else to do but go to bed, think sad thoughts endlessly through weary hours, for she could not sleep away the entire time from dusk to dawn. She had no mirror in which to see the ghost of her remembered face and to arrange her white hair. But Rosalie gave her a glass which she might keep. Perhaps her guards could not imagine any pleasure that it might afford their prisoner. The Queen gave Rosalie a ribbon that had held her hair. Sometimes the girl brought flowers knowing that the Queen loved them though they reminded her of the Dauphin's bouquets. One day Mme Richard conducted her small boy to the Queen's cell; but Marie Antoinette caressing, kissing him, said that she thought about her own son day and night; and fell into an hysteria of tears. Mme Richard kindly took her child away, and never brought him there again.

Sometimes when Rosalie hesitated to enter: "Come, do not fear," the Queen said graciously; and, one day, "Rosalie, this morning you shall do my hair." One of the gendarmes came between them: "No: I will do it." Marie Antoinette could still have laughed if this had happened at an earlier period of her imprisonment, but now she stared majestically at this man, and said ironically, rising to make her own coiffure: "I thank you." The gendarme later told Rosalie he had not wished to annoy the lady, but feared for his life if orders were disobeyed.

A low screen behind which Marie Antoinette could dress

with some protection from the gendarmes' eyes was better than no modification of the strange burlesque which in this cell was played as if in mockery of the high publicity of Versailles. Her scanty wardrobe was increased by garments sent to her by Mme Elizabeth and kept in order by Rosalie. A guard gave up his pipe when he discovered that she disliked smoke. Her meals were excellent, well-cooked, and many prisoners in the Conciergerie did not fare so well. The women of the markets, forgetting their old grudges, slipped their best produce into Mme Richard's hands as gifts for Marie Antoinette in addition to provisions which were bought for her. And she was still provided with her favorite drink, the water of the Ville d'Avray.

Again, as in the Tower, there were plots to rescue her: futile efforts outside France, and, in Paris, a vain attempt to bribe Danton. The principal scheme — the *Affaire de l'Œillet* or *Carnation Plot* — was that of the baron de Batz, one of last spring's conspirators. Near the end of August, Rougeville (friend of Michonis, republican who would save a queen) gained admission through this friend to the Queen's presence; but she had grown so thin he scarcely recognized her; and she was so amazed to see him that she shrank backward, trembled, blushed, and wept, embarrassed at the thought of such a sight as she presented. He tried to tell her something about these carnations he had brought with him, but seeing that she was too dazed to understand, he dropped them out of sight, talked to her, gained her confidence, though she begged him not to run so great a risk in her behalf. When he was gone she found the flowers which concealed a note to which she could reply only by pricking with a pin these words upon a piece of paper: "I am constantly watched, I neither read nor write, I trust you. Come." She gave this note to Gilbert, a gendarme, who sent it to Rougeville. Much bribery seemed to have assured all necessary co-operation;

Michonis was to arrive with a forged order from the government for the return of Marie Antoinette to the Tower. But one of the guards revealed the secret, said he'd call for help if any further steps were taken. The Queen had reached the passageway beyond her cell, appeared to have crossed the threshold of her freedom, then, snatched back again, hurried into her room, she found herself behind a door more tightly locked than it had been before.

Here she remained until the eleventh of September when, in consequence of the knowledge that attempts to save her were still being made, she was removed to a still more closely guarded and more distant cell. Like the first, this second room was damp, unhealthy, and her pillow rested against an old wet wall. Even the guards complained of their bed which was just like hers. A new mattress was provided for her by Mme Bault successor to Mme Richard who was discharged after the Carnation Plot; and an old carpet hung across the wall at the head of her bed absorbed a little of the dampness. But though the food continued to be good, the Queen had lost her appetite; and though treatment of her continued on the whole to be what it had been in her first cell, she had lost that faint hope which kindness had encouraged in her during those first weeks; and now she spent much time in walking up and down the room. She was apprehensive, nervous but uncomplaining, still courageous. The power to pray, which she had lost when the Dauphin was taken from her, had returned and brought her comfort. The days grew shorter, the nights colder, and she slept fully dressed, partly for greater warmth, partly to be ready in case of an alarm, a terror which seemed to her connected in some way with insults hurled at her when she looked through her window at the courtyard of the prisoners. She grew so weak that sometimes she could scarcely stand. She was attacked by rheumatism, her eyes troubled her, and she had almost lost

the sight of one of them. The immediate and chief cause of weakness was the frequency of hemorrhages with which for several weeks she had been afflicted, caused by accumulated physical strain and, very likely, due in part to the beginning of a general tubercular condition. Versailles itself was often cold. What must have been the chill of Temple Tower and Conciergerie ?

The time was passing; it might be too late, but there were still plots to save her, though she had no faith in their success. A Mme Maussion, like Mme Atkyns in the Tower, seems to have tried to take the Queen's place in prison, an offer of which calumny said that she coldly and ungratefully declined to take advantage. No doubt, if her manner seemed ungracious, it was because she did not understand, just as she failed for a long time to grasp what Rougeville said. Now, all the more, she could present to sudden thought a wandering mind, and she was subject to spells of what appeared to be a kind of stupor, according to an Englishman who saw her in the Conciergerie.

An American sea-captain of Wiscasset, Maine, had sailed to France to rescue Marie Antoinette. He furnished with clothes and all available accessories his ship in which he planned to bring her back. He sent her a note like Rougeville's, in a bouquet, but, unlike Rougeville's, it did not reach her. This man was Stephen Clough, his boat the *Sally;* and when he returned without the Queen he moved into a house the things he had collected for her use; and this so-called "House of Marie Antoinette" still stands.

There were so many other plans to rescue her that in September they were referred to as a permanent conspiracy. Even Danton, very secretly and by no means wholeheartedly, is said to have attempted something in her favor; but if many tried to save her, more powerful persons were set upon her death. Hérault de Séchelles, to whom she had been gracious at Versailles, weakly advocated her exchange for other pris-

oners, then voted for her trial, fearing to face an evident majority. Others made futile gestures or jumped, like Fersen, to the false conclusion that no proofs against her could be brought to light. They failed to see that an unshakable resolution to convict her would take upon itself the full responsibility for the sentence; would glory in so doing, as having deserved the highest gratitude of France whose patriots acknowledged with magnificent acclaim a service so distinguished and so honorable.

Meanwhile the foreigners, advancing from the north, driving the French army back, were, in effect, inciting Paris to the revenge which they had forbidden with insulting threats, to the reprisal for which Paris had long been awaiting an excuse, and for which, in defiance of its enemies, Paris now set the date.

CHAPTER XII

REPRISAL

Ce que j'ai fait, j'ai cru le devoir faire.
Je ne prends pas pour juge un peuple téméraire.

— RACINE

Thunder on! Stride on, Democracy!
Strike a vengeful stroke!

— WHITMAN

THE TRIAL of the Queen of France was voted July 27, and on that day, as if to indicate that France's rulers past and present had all been simultaneously condemned, it was decreed that the tombs of the Kings at Saint-Denis should be opened and desecrated.

The public prosecutor, Fouquier-Tinville, had not at first been able to obtain the documents he called essential though he asked for them repeatedly and had at last decided to abandon an unnecessary effort; but to make it seem that he had planned that all should rest upon legality, he wrote October 5: "Even now no papers relative to Marie Antoinette have been delivered to me; consequently the Tribunal cannot handle this case according to the will of the Convention." Six days later he received the records of the King's trial, and these, apparently, must now suffice for present purposes.

Before she was transferred to her second cell in the Conciergerie, Marie Antoinette had been subjected to interrogations concerning the Carnation Plot. Her answers had been clever, unavailing, and had set the tone which she was to maintain throughout the trial itself. She had revealed a courage,

a presence of mind, a resourcefulness which impressed those inclined to favor her, and at the same time strengthened the determination of her inquisitors.

She had thus been questioned: "Are you interested in the success of the armies of our enemies ?"

"I am interested in the success of the armies of the nation to which my son belongs, for the patriotism of a mother is the patriotism of her son."

"What is your son's nationality ?"

"Can you ask ? Is he not French ?"

"Your son is a citizen like any other. Have you renounced every privilege which once belonged to the erstwhile significant, now empty title 'king' ?"

"We — my son and I — desire nothing so ardently as we desire France's welfare."

"You are, then, actually glad there is no longer any royalty nor any King in France ?"

"Our unique prayer is that France shall be great and happy."

"How is it, then, that having, as you say you have, an interest in the prosperity of France, you should have made every effort to unite your cause with that of your relatives who are at war with France ?"

"My relatives are my children. I can be happy only when I am with them, never happy anywhere without them."

"You regard as your enemies those who make war on France ?"

"I regard as my enemies all those who do my children harm."

"Of what nature is that harm which may be done your children ?"

"It is of all imaginable kinds."

"Especially that kind which consists of depriving your son of the crown ?"

"If France is to prosper under a King's rule, I wish that

King to be my son. If France is to be happy without a King, my son and I will share that happiness."

She had deeply felt that, so far, she had spoken truthfully; for she had not been called upon to say that she was certain there could be no order, no security in France without a King. But she had had an equally profound conviction that in such ways as she might find expedience in deviating from the truth she would, in future, be in every way most absolutely justified in the impartial minds of all right-thinking people.

After this first cross-examination and another one which forced her to admit the facts of the Carnation Plot, there was a month's interval before the beginning of her trial on October 12.

It was dark at six o'clock that evening when she was conducted to the Palais de Justice, the great, dim, almost empty hall where in her poor black gown she seemed to search with weary eye the vaulted space for a familiar face, but she saw none, because the light was far too faint, or else her semi-blindness hindered her. Moreover she observed that the two candles burning on the table next to her served principally to reveal her face to others and not theirs to her.

She listened to the lengthy list of grievances against her, especially those involving foreign aid. They made her think that if she was to be punished for what Austria and Prussia had done in her behalf, the punishment might well be light. And then again she wondered: May not the foreigners even now, at last, arrive in time ? She did not know how near they were, nor that with each forward step they drove her one inch further toward her death. She had been sitting calmly on a bench facing the public prosecutor, and in her face was all the dignity of the Queen, the sorrow of the victim of long-continued tortures. When she was asked her name she wondered if anything could be less credible, more strange than her reply: "I am *Marie Antoinette de Lorraine d' Autriche,*

aged thirty-eight, the widow of the King of France." She heard the mournful echo of her lonely voice in the great spaces of the dark, cold hall.

"Before the revolution, you had political relations with the King of Bohemia which were counter to the interests of France."

"With my brother the King of Bohemia my relations were those of friendship; they were not political."

"Unsatisfied by having ruined French finance, by having wasted money earned by the people's sweat, you sent millions to Austria to be used against France which was supporting your extravagance."

"Never. My brother had no need of French money, but, had he needed it, I never would have sent it."

"You wished to reign at any cost, to remount the throne over the bodies of dead patriots."

"We had no need to reascend the throne on which at that time we were securely seated. We have always wished that France might achieve happiness. Let her be happy — really happy — and we will be content.

"During the revolution you have not ceased to work against liberty, to intrigue with foreign powers."

"Since the beginning of the revolution I have denied myself all foreign correspondence, and I have never had a decisive voice in the internal affairs of government."

She had deliberately, absolutely, lied. But she knew that her foreign correspondence was a long, weary toil to save France from anarchy, and that if the enemies who surrounded her would listen to her, give her time, she could explain all clearly, honorably. No one, she felt, had ever listened to her patiently; no one would listen now; no one seemed capable of understanding what seemed so obvious to her — except one man and only one: Fersen. She could think of no one else. The world had gone mad. But in that mad world she knew

that she could still be sane and still have the courage to defend a fundamental truth.

"You taught Louis," her interrogator continued, "that art of profound dissimulation by which, too long, he fooled the good French people who had no idea that perfidy, rascality could ever be so deep."

"Yes, the French have been indeed deceived most cruelly, but neither by my husband nor by me."

"By whom, then ?"

"By those whose interest lay in that deceit. Their interest was not ours."

"Who, in your opinion, were to profit by that means ?"

"I do not know their names."

"Do you regard a King essential to the welfare of the nation ?"

"An individual cannot judge of that."

"Do you regret your son's loss of the crown ?"

"I shall regret nothing for him when France shall have been made happy."

To questions concerning war against the foreigners begun a year ago last spring, she cleverly replied that it was France that first declared that war which the Assembly had demanded and which the King had announced his resolution to wage in response to that insistence and to the unanimous voice of all his ministers. But she was not believed in this, nor when she said she never plotted with the *émigrés*. Her enemies could not think she spoke the truth, for she had been ostentatiously the friend of Artois at Versailles. Her foes jumped without warning from subject to subject hoping to catch her unawares, but she was always ready; and when they asked her what occurred at that banquet given to the Flanders Regiment she skilfully disguised an ironical implication in the expression of her certainty that soldiers so devoted to the King could not have trampled on the national cockade which

Louis himself had worn; and that she saw no demonstration of hostility to France, and that, moreover, had she seen it, she would have made her disapproval manifest.

The attorneys appointed for the Queen's defence were informed of this honor only at the last moment, and they arrived on the thirteenth of October, the day after the first questioning of their then defenceless client. With his colleague Tronçon-Ducoudray, Chauveau-Lagarde approached Marie Antoinette with deep respect, his eyes filled with tears, his knees trembling; but she received him with a majesty so full of gentleness that he felt sure she trusted him and would appreciate all his efforts in which he now determined to surpass himself. He read to her the act of accusation, horrible to him, but which she calmly heard and then spoke reasonably. With fear more deeply founded than her momentary confidence, he saw that she had hope that such a set of charges could in no way be proved, and that, in consequence, she would be acquitted. He advised her to plead for a delay that he and Tronçon might have time in which to draw up a defence. "To whom must I address myself ?" "The National Convention." "No," she quickly answered, "never !"; but he insisted it was her duty to her children to try every means by which her name might be exonerated; and at last she wrote:

Citizen President: the citizens Chauveau-Lagarde and Tronçon-Ducoudray, whom the Tribunal has chosen to be my lawyers, tell me that they have been advised only today of their appointment. I am to be tried tomorrow, and it is impossible for my attorneys to read in so short a time all documents referring to the case. I owe it to my children to do all I can to justify their mother, and my counsel asks the privilege of three days' grace, which, I hope, the National Convention will see fit to grant.

— Marie Antoinette

There was, of course, no answer to her letter, and she could only wait for morning, for the inspiration of the moment in the long course of subsequent examination, and for the effect of the dexterity which her lawyers might possess.

It was eight o'clock, the fourteenth of October, when Marie Antoinette was brought again to the Tribunal by a winding stairway scarcely wide enough for her narrow skirts which, brushing by, reminded her of other days when the great staircase of Versailles had hardly been too broad for spreading paniers worn by the Queen of France and by her ladies. She was more neatly dressed this morning than on her first appearance here, the evening before last; her hair more carefully arranged under a white cap bound with bands of black and white which hung below her shoulders over a white kerchief. Her sad, worn face had lost the beauty which her charm, if not her position, had once claimed for it, but her proud head still carried the assurance of its gracefulness, as she moved slowly across the great room in which Louis IX received ambassadors five hundred years ago, administered high justice; and in which the Sun King, whip in hand, had flicked imposing sovereignty at a trembling Parlement. Here an unhonored and deserted widow of an unhonored, dead descendant of the Kings of France, a pale, weak, white-haired lady took her seat wearily; but the crowd demanded that she stand, that it might have a better view of her; that those who could remember her in other days might take their pleasure in comparing a vanished, brilliantly be-jewelled figure to this dull, shrunken semblance of itself, this image of premature old age, of helpless misery which had once been crowned with youth and power, supremely set above all France with France's King. Those who were nearby heard her murmur: "Will the people never weary of my weariness?" Not while they could watch the mournful struggle of this most interesting of pris-

oners at which knitting-women gazed in cruel curiosity while their needles rested.

Calmly, attentively, then indifferently, then scornfully, as she revealed by the slightly varying curl of her proud lip, she heard again the act of accusation, motionless, except for fingers that ran lightly over the arm of her chair as if they touched the keys of a piano, as if she played a light, gay tune to mock the absurdity of naming her a Fredegonde, a Messalina, a Medici, scourge of the French: the absurdity of all the long, reiterated, tiresome, tireless calumny. Many questions that had been put to her were asked again, with unimportant variations; and she still answered patiently with skilful, ineffectual cleverness. Hours were spent in listening to irrelevant or trivial remarks of witnesses among whom a nobleman, Monsieur de La Tour du Pin, made her a deep, courtly bow, referred to her as to her majesty the Queen, to the rage of Fouquier and therefore to her injury; in painful and unnecessary examination of relics, locks of her children's hair, a bit of paper with notations which she called a table used for the Dauphin's lessons in arithmetic. These were the only proofs that could be brought against her. The proud lips curled disdainfully to hide the sorrow which, ever present to her, could be increased by gazing at these objects, while, like distant Fersen, she felt again the comfort of the thought: "These creatures have no dangerous material to bring before the court."

"Trianon," they flung at her, "must have cost enormous sums." Charmingly, almost naïvely, she replied: "Possibly, very likely more than I could have wished, but one was led from expense to expense. I am more desirous than anyone of knowing all the facts connected with the matter."

"Was it not at Trianon that you knew Mme de La Motte ?"

Her manner froze into disdain.

"I never knew her."

"But was she not your victim in the Necklace Affair ?"

"She could not have been, since I did not know her."

Now she was impatiently attacked: "You persist in denying that you knew her ?" But the Queen with lofty calm, conscious of rightness needing no emphasis, replied: "I have no such plan. I say and I persist in saying what is true."

"Did you not intend to unite Lorraine to Austria ?"

"No."

Then, with idiotic irrelevance: "But your name is *of Lorraine.*"

She enlightened his ignorance: "One's name is always of the country of one's race."

Dully, monotonously, the trial dragged its long inconsequence, broken by a wild shot of calumny which flew wide of its mark. Hébert had interviewed the Dauphin, filched from his terrorized ignorance a meaningless confession that his mother had corrupted him. Hébert had also questioned Mme Elizabeth and her niece who were too horrified by the boy's words to consider in that moment the conditions under which he had been living and his irresponsible immaturity. Mme Elizabeth, in justice to Marie Antoinette, had felt it wise to explain that the child had been forbidden by his mother to practice masturbation which had become his habit. She had hoped he would remember this, confess it, and thereby amend his statement. But the Dauphin was frightened; he dared say nothing more; and Hébert, reporting at the trial of the Queen the testimony of her son, omitted purposely all mention of the declaration of Mme Elizabeth. He repeated, with all the details which, he said, the Dauphin confided to him, the alleged intercourse between son and mother. To his surprise Hébert was not applauded in the courtroom; and Fouquier, noting this, proceeded at once to other matters; whereupon one of the stupid jurors called attention to the fact that Marie Antoinette had not replied to Hébert's charge. Rising

a little from her chair, the Queen with outstretched arm and with a voice that achieved eloquence addressed the audience: "If I have made no answer, it is because nature refuses to reply to such an accusation made against a mother. I appeal to every mother here."

The hall was thrown into confusion by her words while she sank into her chair again. There were loud cries, fainting women, and a felt sympathy for the accused. The President demanded in vain that the examination of the witnesses be resumed, and it was necessary to adjourn the court till order had been restored. The vileness of Hébert had conferred a greater favor on the Queen than all the arguments of her lawyers. The Queen, meanwhile had leaned toward Chauveau-Lagarde: "Did I not answer too indignantly ?" "Madame, the answers that you naturally make are unexceptionable. Why do you ask ?" "Because I heard a woman say: 'You see how proud she is.' "

Conducted from the courtroom for the interval of recess, she thought of her poor son, of the treatment that had made him lie, as it could make all children young as he. She had noticed the guards' rough authority, and she now imagined other horrors: that they must have taught him revolutionary songs, induced him to swear obscene oaths against his parents. She remembered that he had been quick to learn his proper lessons when he chose, and that he must have readily acquired the reverse when threatened with she knew not what alternatives, tortures which, perhaps, he underwent, in spite of his obedience, as punishment for the least initial opposition, even for an instant's misunderstanding of the harsh instruction. But she determined to suppress these thoughts; to centre her attention on the trial about to recommence.

It was now nearly five o'clock and she had been in court since early morning with no refreshment but a bowl of soup now brought to her. She told Chauveau-Lagarde that she

had seen the name of Manuel upon the list of witnesses, and when the attorney said that no one would be able to bring evidence against her, she replied, thinking that Manuel had certain information: "I fear only him." But when, at midnight, the court again had been adjourned, not even Manuel had done her cause an injury; and she had avoided naming or incriminating friends; and there was in her mind a hope that whispered steadily.

Next morning, the fifteenth of October, at eight o'clock, she was again before the Tribunal, where, except for a short intermission in the afternoon, she sat hour by hour far into the night, listening chiefly to the successive futile witnesses, till, at last, the President addressed her: "Have you anything to say ?" "Yesterday," she answered in an even voice and with a confidence not altogether kept in check by prudence, "I did not know the witnesses nor the testimony that was to be brought forth against me. Well then: not one accusation has had one definite proof; and I have merely this to say: I was the wife of Louis XVI, and I was bound to act according to his will."

She had indeed been forced to do as the King wished. But it would not save her to hold him responsible who was executed nine months ago, and of whose alleged crimes her enemies thought her wishes had been the constant source. Her words appeared to be a calumny pronounced against the King of France. But at this moment she had almost felt that but for Louis' hesitation, doubts, and weakness she and her husband and their children might have been able to escape. Moreover her illusive hope had, for an instant, numbed a weary caution which had struggled through long hours, day and night. Yet this was an unimportant error.

Chauveau-Lagarde now had permission to pronounce a lengthy speech, and, at the end of it, the Queen whispered: "How tired you must be, Monsieur. I am deeply sensible of

all that you have done for me." These words addressed to the attorney were noted by the President, and Marie Antoinette was not allowed again to speak to either of her lawyers. Close to her stood De Busne, officer of police, whose duty was to guard her; and when she spoke wearily of her thirst, those who were near looked questioningly at each other, wondering if they dared do anything for her, till at last De Busne, disgusted by a cowardice he seemed to share, brought her a glass of water. Next day he was imprisoned.

The night was cold, the audience slowly filtered out, the Queen sat calmly in the great dim hall. The steps of those who had been listening echoed up and down the Salle des Pas Perdus until, at one o'clock, the end of argument marked dismally the awaited moment, and a distant voice heard as if through a window, like drops of water falling into a deep well, let fall these words into the vaulted shadows. "The jury will at once deliberate." And now the scattered crowd was drifting back, fixing its eyes upon the door by which the jurors would return. The people wondered if a rumor that the Queen would merely be deported was to be proved true. There was not long to wait. The jurors had been warned that to acquit Marie Antoinette would be a judgment passed against their lack of patriotism. They were of every class from first to last estate, and none of them had any wish to die, while many, if not most of them, were honestly convinced the Austrian woman had betrayed the nation to which all of them belonged, in spite of the negligible small detail of conscience that there had been no proof whatever of any one of all her alleged crimes.

A bell announced that the jury had arrived at its decision, and its members now returned. The Queen who had been absent during the deliberative interval was now conducted back again, and the great audience scrutinized her calm, weary face. She took her seat and she was motionless, trying not to think,

daring desperately to hope, knowing the cruelty of French hatred, yet wondering if France would dare to murder her officially, to run what still appeared to her to be the certain risk of Austrian revenge. France had been braver than she had imagined it could ever be, yet she could not believe the nation quite so mad as to do that for which no honest human being could conceivably admit the least excuse. She could not silence the persistent thought that she might be sent back to Austria, her children, no doubt, with her. The sympathy that she had noted in her favor when Hébert's vileness brought it out must have been a sign of pity in these revolutionists.

Then an appalling sound assailed her ears — one word incredible yet unmistakable — the verdict: Death.

The calmness that had covered hope now served to thinly veil the shock of her astonishment, and she was numbed by the unimaginable realism of surprise. She vaguely heard a reading of the law: "For all communication or understanding with the enemies of France the punishment shall be death. For all efforts to stir up civil war in France, to incite insurrection against the legitimate government, the punishment shall be death." She listened to the throbbing cords of consciousness as if at a great distance. What have I done to stir up insurrection against the legitimate government, the government of the King ? Then from another source came spoken words: "Have you anything to say ?" The mockery of the question sickened her. She gave a sign: her head moved slowly left to right, and still she maintained silence, heard that she was to be led away, and found that she had just the strength to stand, and just the strength to walk, and, slowly moving as if watching in strange curiosity the floor that moved so strangely underneath her feet, she appeared unconscious of all other things, all other aspects, thoughts, impressions of this scene. Then all at once she noticed or remembered that she must pass as she had passed before close by that portion of the

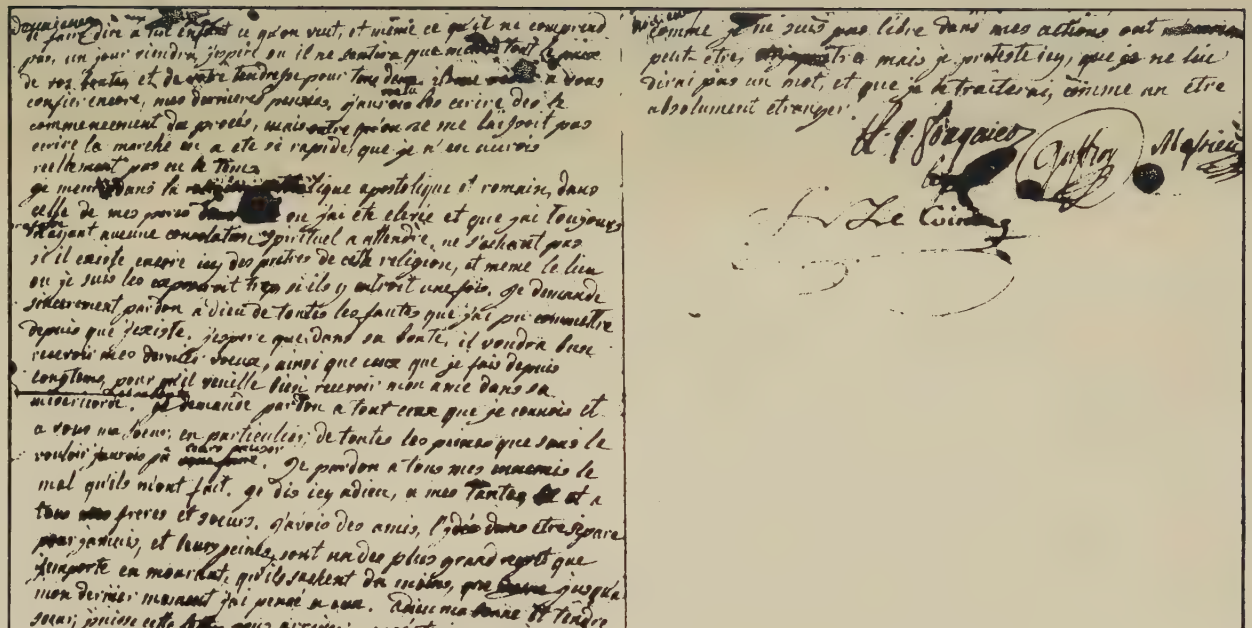
audience near the exit, and that she would seem with downcast eyes to be defeated, humbled, to have at last been made to bow the head that she had said would never bend, and to seem conscious of the justice of a penalty that she had thought she could escape; and that these people whom she dreamed that she would fool would say she had acknowledged that they had fooled her — they who had no right to question the least significant detail of her conduct — these upstarts, despicable wretches, the vile *canaille* of cut-throats, vagabonds. Of these, of thousands, of the good and bad who constitute a nation, she was still the Queen. She raised her head in all majestic consciousness of the inviolable principle of the sovereignty which she represented, and with unconquerable disdain she left the room — left it to gloat over its empty triumph, empty of all power to crush its victim, capable only of sending her to death.

Slowly De Busne escorted her down the long corridor to the prisoners' stairway where she hesitated and halted, exhausted for a moment by the effort of her exit. "I can scarcely see where I must place my feet." The soldier offered her his arm, supported her till she came to her last cell. And here she had no time nor inclination to analyse the hideous travesty, the trial of a Queen of France, for she was seized at once by an exalting energy; she knew that she would soon be driven to the scaffold, and she hastened to undertake the last act which, for her children, she could still perform. She did not draw a line between those things that she had done and those that she had not among all those of which she had been declared guilty. It was not she who brought famine and massacre upon the French, who tried to plot with *émigrés*. But it was she who worked laboriously over plans for the King's flight, and it was she particularly who wrote to foreigners, betrayed French military secrets, taught Louis to dissimulate. Yet, if she had made these clear distinctions, they

could not have changed her attitude, her consciousness of innocence; for all that she had done would still stand in her mind as obedience to the duty of a wife, a mother, a Queen, a daughter of a great Empress. And there had now come over her an inspiration, a strength far stronger than her pride, a clear possession of the nobility and courage which she had never doubted as her own, but which had gained a force which would outlast her final torture and make it seem the least of all. She asked for paper, pen, and ink, and wrote one more appeal to justice, and her last farewell.

16 *October*, 4 ½ *o'clock*

To you, my sister, I write for the last time. I have just been condemned, not to a shameful death which only criminals can die, but to rejoin your brother. Innocent like him, I hope to be as brave as he in the last moment. I am calm as one can never be unless one's conscience is at rest. I have been living, as you know, my good, tender sister, solely for my children, and my deepest sorrow is in leaving them. And in what peril I leave you who have sacrificed everything to be with us! I have learned from the prosecuting attorney that my daughter has been taken from you. [So she imagined because she heard that Mme Elizabeth and Mme Royale had been separately questioned about the Dauphin.] *Alas! poor child, I dare not write to her, and she would not receive my letter if I did.* [It appears that the Queen changed her mind, wrote a few lines which, like this letter to Mme Elizabeth, were not delivered.] *I do not even know if this one will reach you, but I send through you my blessings for my children, and I hope that some day when they are older and with you again, they will appreciate all your tender care. Let them never forget what I have so often said to them: that they must base their lives on principles of duty, and that they will be happy if they love and trust each other. Let my daughter feel that, being*



MARIE ANTOINETTE'S LAST LETTER

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older than her brother, she should help and comfort him according to her wider experience which her love for him will tell her how to use. Let all my son's devotion to his sister be dictated by his love for her, and let them both remember that wherever they may be, whatever their condition, they can be really happy only in each other's love, and, for the truth of this, they can need no example but yourself. What a consolation in all our troubles our love has been to you and me! Happiness is never perfect except when one shares it with a friend; and where can one find a friend more true than one who may be found in one's own family? Let my son always remember his father's parting words which have been repeated to him: "Never seek vengeance for my death." I must speak of something that has deeply pained my heart, and I know how cruelly you yourself must have suffered on my son's account. Forgive him, my dear sister; remember that he is a child, and that it is easy to make a child say anything, particularly what he cannot understand. I hope a day will come when he will all the more gratefully cherish all your tenderness to him and to his sister. I have still to confide to you my parting thoughts and my convictions which I have wished to send you ever since the trial began, but neither was I allowed to write nor was there actually time enough, so steadily was the trial carried on. I die in the apostolic Roman Catholic faith, the faith of my fathers, the faith that I was taught in childhood, the faith that I have always professed. I can expect no spiritual consolation, and I do not even know if there be still a priest devoted to this creed, but, if there were, he could not enter where I am. I pray God to forgive me every fault of mine since I was born, and I hope that in his goodness he will hear my last vows, and those that I have made in all this time, and that in his goodness and mercy he will receive my soul. I ask forgiveness of everyone I know, and especially of you, my sister, for any pain I may have caused although unwillingly; and I pardon all my

enemies the harm that they have done me. I bid my aunts, my brothers, sisters, all farewell. I have had friends. The thought of leaving them forever will be one of my most grievous sorrows when I die. Let them know that in my last moments I thought of them. Adieu, my good, my tender sister. May you receive this letter. Think of me always. I kiss you you with all my heart, and my dear children. Oh God! how it rends my heart to leave them forever! Adieu! Adieu! I must devote myself entirely to prayer. Not being free I may be brought a forsworn priest, and I here protest I will not say one word to him, but treat him as an absolute stranger.

Here her letter ended abruptly. Perhaps she had been interrupted; yet there was nothing more to say. No line was lacking and no color in this portrait she had painted of the self she knew, of her true self, as she imagined, clearly and completely represented now beyond all doubt in her deep certainty. Her faith, her double sense of personal and religious duty, formed no new quality derived from time and pain, for it had been always with her, growing beneath the gaiety of life; now, when life had for so long been sorrowful, it had reached maturity but had not changed her love of life nor her idea of what she still would wish to make of it. Wisdom in her letter is revealed in kindness and forgiveness which had supplanted bitter and long-nursed resentments. The friends that she could still, could always love, had caused her pain; her family had often brought her sorrow; yet she could feel toward both as she had always wished to feel, as if the past had always been what she had hoped that it might be. There was a thought which she had not the time to analyse but which was a subconscious part of the general sense of comfort which had overtaken her: that no one with knowledge of the world could fail to understand her view of life. The more discerning of such persons would see her errors, indiscretions,

and other reasons for her failure to play a pleasant game successfully, and they would see that such a game was not, as it had seemed to others, a complete expression of her life and of her will to live, although it was a personal equation for certain of her friends. She had asked to be forgiven for all her faults, but she had never had an understanding of many of her failings, her frequent irritability, occasional violence, foolish stubbornness, but above all her lack of cleverness, her inability to force others to obey her. In addition to amusement it was the moral, not the mental, quality which she judged essential. That moral quality she claimed; the mentality she lacked did not disturb her by its absence. Finally, in her mind, there was no contradiction between life as she saw it and faith as she professed it. Millions had lived, would live, as she had tried to live, but happily, successfully, the social formula being always more or less the same; and therefore she was absolutely certain that it was bad luck which had persistently defeated her; and that her personal and public life stood clearly in the light of sympathetic and of understanding recognition.

At five o'clock, while she was writing, the city sounded its loud call to arms; her pen still moved across the sheet upon which several words were blurred by ink spots and by tears. Overcome by grief she threw herself upon her bed to weep for all the bitterness of her abandonment. At six arrived a priest whom, as she had written, she was not surprised to see. He noticed that the cold early morning chilled her, and he suggested that she put her pillow on her feet, and this she did as she had often done in the preceding nights. She had, in spite of what she wrote her sister, this conversation: "Your death will expiate" . . . the priest began; she interrupted him: "My errors, but no crime, for I have committed none." He tried to strengthen courage, but she said: "I have learned bravery in long years of woe, and it is not their ending that shall find me weak, for I should have more need of heroism

were I still to live." Thus she corrected this well-intentioned heretic, but she would not confess to him. In spite of the evidence of her last letter it is said that during her stay in the Conciergerie she did have the consolation of a visit from an orthodox priest; yet, even if this were so, her real confession was her letter to Mme Elizabeth.

The hour of seven had struck. Armed forces thirty thousand strong flanked in double lines both sides of the long way from the Conciergerie to the Place de la Révolution; cannon guarded the bridge heads and other strategic points that marked the route, and there was no escape.

Now entered Rosalie, trembling with grief, to ask the Queen if she might do her any service. "My girl, I shall never be in need of anything again." "You still have need of strength, Madame, and I have warm soup ready on my stove." The Queen, still weeping on her bed, gave her consent to this, but when it came and she sat up to taste it, she could only swallow a few spoonfuls, then sink weakly back. But there was no time for rest, and Rosalie now helped her majesty to dress. The Queen of France bent down behind her screen to hide herself from gendarmes' eyes when one of them approached. "In the name of decency, Monsieur, allow me to dress unseen." The man's curiosity convinced him of his duty. She blushed, changed all her clothes, her blood-stained garments, with all imaginable aids to privacy, and thus endured once more the travesty of the old publicity of royal lives. She discarded her mourning for a white dress she had worn before the trial, and which she put on over a black skirt. She carefully arranged a scarf of white muslin about her neck, and on her head a plain white linen cap. Her black silk stockings, her high-heeled black shoes which she had managed to preserve, the very last of all her ornaments, adorned her feet.

She thought she still had time for prayer when officers arrived at the door, and they commanded her: "Pay attention;

your sentence is to be read to you." "There is no need to tell me what I know too well." "No matter; you must hear it all again." The Queen maintained a scornful silence; and the executioner arrived. "You come early," she observed surprisedly, "could you not wait ?" "No, Madame, I am here by order now." This man was very tall, his name was Sanson, and he moved near the Queen: "Give me your hands." She drew back: "You do not mean to tie my hands ? The King's were not bound"; so she had heard; but the officers sharply spoke to Sanson who had hesitated: "Do your duty." "Oh ! My God !" cried Marie Antoinette as Sanson seized her weak hands and tied them too tightly behind her back. She looked up imploringly without a word, without a tear. Sanson removed her cap, took in his hand a sharp instrument with which his victim thought he meant to murder her as she glanced over her shoulder. He was, however, merely cutting once again her hair which she had cut sufficiently, she thought, some time before. She had wondered, not long ago, if she might die before she should have reached the scaffold. "Will not the people tear me to pieces on the way ?" she asked a guard, thinking, perhaps, of the princesse de Lamballe. "No, Madame," he replied, with coldest comfort, "you will reach the scaffold safely."

Up to the prison gate had crowded a mass of curious faces waiting to see the Queen. It opened, and her majesty appeared, enduring calmly the cold stare of Paris, her sad worn face unpainted in imitation of a vanished beauty, unlike the face of Mary Stuart which was permitted every known device of regal setting at a corresponding time. The Queen of France presented each line of suffering clear in the light of day. There was a deathly pallor in her sagging cheeks surrounding the wide crimson flush, the circles underneath the bloodshot eyes. Yet no neglect of costume could uncurl the proud disdain of her imperious lips, nor unbend the noble carriage

of her head. It had been better to have left her poor hands free, to have chained down her head, for her high dignity created increased hatred, and the crowd longed to see the knife cut through her neck. Her blind eye stared, and with the other one she looked out over and beyond that throng of subjects who had captured, bound their Queen, but could not bring her to submission. She scarcely thought of all that here she represented, as she left the ancient palace of the Kings of France. She stood indomitable, proud, triumphant, as if strong enough to crush the rabble. Her mind did not betray itself — she did not seem to be engaged in prayer, in concentration on the greatest test of bravery, in resolution to die calmly and without a sound.

Lowering her eyes to see where she must place her high-heeled step, she saw a muddy cart, a clumsy-looking, heavy, white plough-horse, the driver in a blouse — all this instead of the conveyance she had thought to see: a carriage such as bore the King away; and sudden horror struck her, made her beg to have her hands untied a moment; that she might be given necessary freedom to retire behind an angle of the wall, out of the sight of Paris.

A short ladder leaned against the back of the cart; the executioner offered the Queen his arm but she sprang past him, unassisted, with quick high-heeled grace, and took her seat upon a plank facing the horse; then, commanded, faced the other way about, according to the fantastic rigor of revolutionary etiquette. Sanson stood behind her, holding loosely the slack cord which, at the other end, had tightened around her wrists again; and she remained indifferent to the priest who went with her. The thick throng, silent under the pale autumn sun, prevented the cart from moving for some moments; then slowly, preceded by an officer of the National Guards, who raised and lowered alternately his drawn sword, a signal to the people to be still, the strange procession started.

Tears for the moment softened the Queen's face when she saw a child throwing her a kiss; then she recovered all apparent pride, serenity, indifference, strong in her constant thought that she must and would reveal no weakness; that if the foreigners had not frightened Paris, neither could Paris frighten her. The people staring at her face imagined that it grew an instant more intensely scornfully defiant as she saw behind the cart the Palais-Royal, house of Orléans her old enemy; as if she wished to tell him: "You will follow me."

The cart moved slowly down the rue Saint-Honoré past Saint-Roche black with people who deserved, according to the point of view of royalists, the death that others, like them, were to suffer by Napoleon's grapeshot, here. The time had not yet come, nor he who could give the effective order to accomplish it.

A woman spat into her hand, hurled the saliva at the face of Marie Antoinette whose serenity remained unchanged. The cart, though slowly moving, joggled over stones; the Queen whose hands were bound had difficulty in maintaining equilibrium which the rabble, noting, cried exultingly: "That bench is not a Trianon cushion, eh ?" And now, for its last shriek and howl, and with a roar of filthy breath, led by an actor Grammont (once unjustly discharged from the Comédie-Française in which the Queen had promptly reinstated him) the *canaille* yelled: "There she is, that infamous Antoinette ! She is f . . ., my friends !" The Queen of France had long forgotten Grammont, long greeted such acclaim disdainfully, and now ignored it. She did not see, a little farther on, the face of Mme Tussaud who saw the head that she remembered crowned and brilliant at Versailles and of which she would soon be making a waxen model. The Queen did not see David at a window with a pencil moving pitilessly over a white sheet, depicting majesty which skilful ridicule could not disguise. She seemed to note in passing the tricolor waving in

the street, and to examine the inscription over certain doorways. She had perhaps been told of a window through which orthodox blessings would flow out to her as she went by. She seemed to ask the priest a question: "What are those words?" He did not read them to her: "Munitions to be used for shooting tyrants"; he held before her eyes a crucifix. She turned away from such a sign in sacrilegious hands, and, from this moment, for all her consciousness of his presence, he might have fallen from the cart. She had no thought of such a trivial result as that of shocking revolutionists. Those in the crowd not altogether lacking understanding would understand her; but, if they did not, it mattered less than nothing now.

At noon the cart crawled over the great Place de la Révolution. Turning her head towards the Tuileries gardens on her right, her face expressed her remembrance that in that garden her son had picked for her the flowers that he called his own; that in those gardens she had once been cheered, a beautiful young girl; that through those gardens she had driven with her boy out into Paris to the foundlings' hospital of which it had been better were he an inmate now, rather than a solitary captive in the Tower. She turned her head again to look at this wide square from which she had been snatched away, long years ago, at the first sign of danger. Now in her premature old age there was not one knee that dared to bend to her, the Queen of France, here in the centre of her kingdom, here where she must die.

The cart crawled on, then turned and stopped. A hideous and incongruous statue of liberty towered above the instrument of oppression, and the Queen, seeing it for the first time, almost fainted, for she had been weakened by those thoughts that had come to her from the gardens, and from this place once named for the King. Now with a supreme effort she was in a moment strong again; and, rising proudly, set her

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SKETCH BY DAVID

FROM A WINDOW AS MARIE ANTOINETTE PASSED BY
ON HER WAY TO THE SCAFFOLD

high heels quickly on the ladder of the cart, moved gracefully and swiftly down and over to the crude steps that took her to the platform where she stood facing the guillotine. A motion of her head made her cap fall, and she was ready: more self-possessed than when she left the Conciergerie, conscious that her enemies had failed to break her spirit, conscious that having come so far, her courage would remain with her one necessary moment more. The mob, in spite of itself, admired her nimble, unexpected strength, but did not love her for it; was, rather, disappointed, for last night she was almost too weak to stand.

Her figure, in clear outline, sketched itself against the background of the gardens' trees. She did not know that at this moment there was triumph for all France as there was triumph here for her. Far to the north her subjects, far outnumbered, were withstanding foreigners at whose hands she had expected safety. But were those hands now knocking at the gates of Paris, she would be standing here as she stood now.

The executioners of Charles I and Mary Stuart asked forgiveness of their victims which Charles I refused. Marie Antoinette had stepped by accident with sharp, high heel upon her executioner's foot: "Monsieur, I beg your pardon." Sanson, for answer, bound her to the board. The knife hung over her for one long moment. She heard the creaking of a rope, and in that instant the knife fell.

EPILOGUE

And all my kingdom for a little grave,
A little, little grave, an obscure grave.

— SHAKESPEARE

EPILOGUE

DEEP CRIMSON cheeks and eye-lids quivering were held up before barbarians who cried: *"Vive la République !"* a cry which all France repeated when it heard that the French army was victorious in the north just at the moment of this rabble's yell around the guillotine beneath which a man soaked his handkerchief in the blood of Marie Antoinette.

Paris was too busy thinking of the desperate encounter of French arms with foreign forces to consider seriously whether the Queen of France or another traitor was being put to death. At Vienna a pretense of mourning covered a reality of shame; Austria preferred not to mention a disaster which it had failed to prevent. There were a few indignant speeches made in Europe followed by the usual return to politics.

Tears were mainly shed by futile Fersen who had had time to worry even during the last days of her whom he still loved, as to whether she had been told that he had mistresses; but the Queen never knew. Then, when he heard that she was dead, he wrote: "I can think of nothing but my loss. It is terrible to know the fact but none of the details. Was she perhaps alone, devoid of consolation at the last ? Those hell-monsters ! No ! Without vengeance I never shall have peace." And, without peace or vengeance, he lived a dozen years and died at the hands of a Swedish mob. He did not even receive the money which Marie Antoinette intended Austria to give him: money that was hers and was to be at least a partial payment of her financial debt.

Mme Elizabeth did not receive her sister's letter, did not know that she had died until seven months later she heard

of it by accident when she herself was on the way to the Place de la Révolution. Her niece, after a year and a half alone in the Tower, was sent to Austria. The weakening Dauphin remained with his jailers who, one day, having taken him to the top of the Tower, saw him pick a few poor flowers which had somehow grown in that bleak spot: saw him place them as he went down again outside his mother's door. Then, in the next year, he died, by reason of deliberate neglect, just as his mother had foreseen.

And France was still unhappy, although there was no King in France, and though some of the Queen's enemies who were also called the nation's foes had followed her to the scaffold: Mme Du Barry against whom she fought a youthful fight went cringing to her death; Hébert, coward, mud-slinger, died abject; the duc d'Orléans, remembering perhaps that Marie Antoinette had thought him cowardly, achieved disdainful impassivity.

On the day of the Queen's death it was decreed that the tomb of her first son at Saint-Denis be opened, desecrated. She herself was flung upon a nameless grave in that poor cemetery of the Madeleine where the poor were thrown in heaps after the fire and panic on the Place Louis XV, a little more than twenty years before. On November 1 she was buried next to the supposed body of her husband; and she was still lying in that grave eighteen years later, when the Tower she had so long wished might be pulled down, was razed to earth. And still she lay there till, after three years, her bones and Louis' were exhumed. Chateaubriand was sure he saw the skull of Marie Antoinette because the smile which he had seen in other years had clearly outlined the bones of her face which now glared up at him.

The funeral procession of the King and Queen began its long and tardy journey out to Saint-Denis. All solemn pomp had been intended, but the crowd was not respectfully in-

clined, and laughed when the high black catafalque caught in the chains that stretched across the way to hold the street lamps. At each delay the crowd jeered cheerfully till at last the royal bones were carried down into the crypt to lie in coffins laid on wooden horses casually as if in a neglected corner of a dusty basement; as if proper dignity were still impossible to provide for this King and Queen, but as if this poor obscurity, which one may see through a narrow opening in an old wall, were a monument to humiliations preserved in death.

NAPOLEON had laid all Europe at his feet. France, dazzled by imperial splendor more intoxicating to patriotic pride than all the glory of the Kings of France, was hypnotized by military magic. At last that power weakened, French soldiers fell back toward France, and when the Empire crashed, the foreigners marching into Paris were hailed as liberators just as Marie Antoinette had hoped they would be greeted a quarter of a century before.

Louis XVIII sat rotting on his throne in rather sane but senile-patriotic grand-paternalism. Fat, he grew fatter, the more extensively to rot, his heavy carcass, blown away by a Napoleonic breath, was gathered up again and dumped once more upon the throne where he disintegrated; pieces of his toes dropped off; his mind sank into unconsciousness, till finally all of him was altogether dead, and then the throne room was swept out, the rubbish carried off to Saint-Denis. Now Artois, old and meaningless, was crowned at Reims to rule, as he imagined, like a King in Paris; then, suddenly awakened, found that he must go again to exile; must move away through Saint-Cloud, Versailles, Rambouillet, casting no shadow, striking no light. The palaces of the Kings still slumbered, for the monarchy was dead; and this futile ghost a lifeless spirit. The Restoration had not recalled Versailles except in one small

way: It had drawn a sketch of two old brothers quarrelling pettishly as two young brothers quarrelled first in their grandfather's time, then in their brother's reign, because in all those years they had learned nothing.

And, with Artois gone, France had not yet heard the end of the long story of its rulers grown so dull, for there was still another foolish Bourbon ghost and then a foolish Bonaparte. And at last France had had enough of Bourbons and Bonapartes in the drab aftermath of revolution and of military splendor. Now France had caught its breath again. Now France, again a republic, achieved a temporary happiness, a comparative content. This is the last irony, the final challenge to the player queen, for she had said: "If France can be contented, happy without a king, then I will not regret the loss of my son's crown."

FINIS

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